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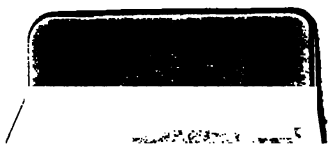
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A
SUMMARY OF SACRED HISTORY,
IN BIBLE LANGUAGE,

FOR
THE USE OF SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES;
WITH
QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION AT THE END OF EACH
CHAPTER.

BY
ALEXANDER TAYLOR,
TEACHER, LATE OF GRIEFF.
EDITOR OF "THE ECONOMICAL COLLECTION FOR SCHOOLS."
AUTHOR OF "FARM BOOK-KEEPING," "A TREATISE ON NATIONAL
EDUCATION," &c.

"Search the Scriptures: they are they which testify of me"—CHRIST.

First Thousand.

EDINBURGH:
JOHN MENZIES, 2 SOUTH HANOVER STREET.
GLASGOW: H. CAMPBELL.
PORTOBELLO: ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

MDCCCLX.



INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

IN the day in which we live, much has been said and written respecting National, Denominational, Secular, and Religious Education. Bills have been framed, brought in, and thrown out of Parliament, again and again, without settling to us, the Inhabitants of Scotland, what our national system of education at present really is. Thus, "hope deferred hath made the heart sick." In the public discussion of these all-important subjects, much has also been said as to the time and manner in which religious instruction should be conveyed, and the sources from which it should be derived.

Having taught a Primary School for more than fifty years, were I to be asked to give my humble opinion as to the time when the training of the young, both for time and eternity, should begin, I would say, with the wisest of men, and the greatest of monarchs—in childhood. "Train up a child in the way he should go," &c.

Those who believe in this royal and sacred mandate, believe also, that education, for good or for evil, for God and His glory, or for sin and its miseries, begins as soon as children can form an idea or express a feeling. Children, at a very early age, are capable of reasoning, comparing different objects with each other, and drawing conclusions from them. Hence the mode in which a child is trained during the two or three first years of its life, will in a great measure depend the comfort of its parents and its own happiness during the succeeding periods of its existence. How necessary, then, that every parent commence the early *establishment* of an absolute and entire autho-

rity over his children. I need no apology for quoting what Mrs Wesley has said on this subject. "In order to form the mind of children, the first thing to be done is to *conquer their will*, and the sooner done the better. As self-will is the root of all sin and misery, so whatever cherishes it in children, insures their wretchedness and irreligion; whatever checks and mortifies it, promotes their future happiness and piety."

It is not my design in this Introductory Notice, to give any lengthened exposition, either on the Physical, Intellectual, or Moral Training of the rising generation. Out of the many valuable works published on these highly interesting subjects, I would most heartily recommend "The Philosophy of Education," by the late James Simpson, Esq., Advocate, Edinburgh; and "The Home School," by the Rev. Norman Macleod, D.D., Glasgow. Having thus merely glanced at the time when Training should *begin*, I shall now as briefly notice the sources from which it should proceed, and some of the means to be employed in its communication. It has been well stated, that the work and responsibility of training children for two worlds must commence and rest with parents. This is undeniable. Parents, because they are parents, must look their duty fair in the face. No one person in the world has such unbounded influence over the understanding and affections of another, as a judicious Christian parent can command among his own children. Occupied as many parents are, they are obliged to engage others to take part in their children's education. Still, the responsibility of parents can never be delegated. A teacher is but an instrument in your hand. You can never make him your substitute. A teacher can give your children secular learning without you; but he can do very little towards forming their characters, unless they feel that he is backed by all the weight of your supreme authority. Thus the parents ought to be the chief source of instruction to their children both by precept and example. Though both parents are equally responsible for the discharge of the difficult, yet delightful and important duties of *training their offspring* for both worlds; we find that, in

general, the MOTHER takes the precedency. In order to succeed in this great, grand, and glorious undertaking, personal piety is absolutely necessary. It has been truly said, "that a parent can no more bring up his children religiously without possessing personal religion himself, than he could teach music who cannot distinguish sounds." Children are quick-sighted observers. Nothing unreal satisfies children. They can soon tell whether your heart rejoices in the consolations of God, which you urge them to seek. Let the parents' first duty be, to counteract and uproot all the inherent atheism which sin has planted in every heart, giving all diligence that their children shall meet them at God's right hand when life is over. As a mean for accomplishing so desirable an end, let parents be sure that the moral atmosphere in which their children breathe be pure and healthy. Remember, that the example they witness, whether in the nursery or elsewhere,—the conversation they hear—the actions they see—the likings and dislikings which others around them express,—these things will make lasting impressions on their character.

It is now generally admitted by all right thinking persons, that intellectual education—that is, mere reading, writing, arithmetic, and a knowledge of natural science,—are not sufficient to form a virtuous character; hence it is absolutely requisite that moral and religious instruction be conjoined. "The only sure foundation of a proper moral and religious education is the revealed will of God, as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; and the proper standard of morals therein inculcated by precept and example ought to be held up to the understanding, to the love, and to the practical habits of children. In endeavouring to teach youth the morality of the Scriptures, it is not enough that the precepts therein contained be merely announced, read, or recited; they ought to be pointedly applied to every moral incident that may occur, and to whatsoever tempers or dispositions may be displayed in the every-day transactions of children, either in their pastime or their study. It has been well observed, that the Bible is one

grand picture of the will of God, and is made up of ten thousand pictures, more or less obvious or minute. In looking at a picture on canvass, or a landscape in nature, a child first discovers the hills, the trees, the houses, the village spires, &c. These he examines long before he attends to the hue of the sky, or the tint of the foliage."

My design in the following Compilation, is to do exactly something of the same kind—to fill the young mind with the clear outlines of Bible pictures, which, like so many posts of observation or landmarks, discover and unite Scripture narrative, precept and doctrine, together, in a pleasing and profitable manner. In executing this, I have confined myself to the Scripture text, esteeming it preferable to anything that could have been put in its place. I have endeavoured to connect and set down events chronologically in the order of time in which they were transacted, interspersing the whole with many valuable practical notes from the best Bible Commentators. In the "Biographical Sketches of Eminent Scripture Characters," I have made copious extracts from the justly popular works of the Rev. Messrs Watts, Blair, Krummacher, Gillfillan, W. B. M'Kenzie, Headley, and others, to all of whom I am much indebted. In order that the reader may not be ignorant of what became of the "Seed of Abraham," from the period in which their history closes in the Old Testament until it re-opens in the New, I have added a chapter containing a connecting link between the two.

If, for the use of Schools and Families, abridgments of the Histories of Greece, Rome, England and Scotland, have been found necessary and useful, it may not be too much most respectfully to solicit a share of public patronage for this "Summary of Sacred History," containing a connected account of the wonderful works of God, in Creation, Providence, and Grace, chronologically arranged, from the Creation of the World to the Return of the Jews from the Captivity of Babylon, and the settling of the affairs of Church and State under Nehemiah.

This Volume will be found not merely historical but biogra-

phical, forming a PICTURE GALLERY OF BIBLE WORTHIES, who, when viewed either as Patriarchs, Historians, Heroes, Judges, Kings, Statesmen, Poets, Priests, Prophets, or Saints, have never been equalled, and far less surpassed. No Book of the same size can be more replete with "examples for our encouragement of those who, in every variety of circumstances—on the throne, and in the dungeon—in health, and in sickness—among friends or foes—in a land of ordinances, or among idolaters—in youth, or in old age—in times of outward peace, or at the risk of their lives—lived by faith in the living God, and were not put to shame! It abounds also in examples for our warning, of men who, in the same circumstances, disobeyed God, and were punished by His righteous judgments."

It is hoped that the utility of this Compendium of Sacred History will not be confined to Private Families, or Public Day-Schools, but be useful to all, especially to Sabbath-School Teachers, by causing a portion of which to be studied from Sabbath to Sabbath, their Pupils cannot fail to obtain, with ease and accuracy, a valuable stock of Bible knowledge. As to past and important events, WHEN, WHERE, and How they took place. As to eminent Bible characters, WHEN, WHERE, and How they lived, WHAT they DID, and How they DID IT.

That the perusal of this Volume, whether in the Family or in the Class-Room, may be blessed of God in alluring the Young to grow familiar with His Word, leading them with increased delight and interest to the study of the WHOLE BIBLE, as the only fountain of that truth and wisdom which alone can make wise unto salvation, is the sincere desire of

Their Humble Servant,

THE EDITOR.

BLAIRFROAR, MUTHILL,
August, 1860.

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CHRONOLOGY OF THE PATRIARCHS.

BIRTH OF CHRIST			Age at the Birth of the heir.	Lived after	Born Anno Mundi and died aged	Died Anno Mundi
Anno Mundi 4004.*						
Ch. Gen. v.	Ver. 3 & 4.	Adam	130			
			800	930	930
	3,	Seth	130		130	
	6,	7	105	807	912	1042
	6,	Enos	235		235	
	9,	10, 11	90	815	905	1140
	9,	Cainan	325		325	
	12,	13, 14	70	840	910	1235
	12,	Mahaleleel	395		395	
	15,	16, 17	65	830	895	1290
	15,	Jared	460		460	
	18,	19, 20	162	800	962	1422
	18,	Enoch	622		622	
	21,	22, 23	65	300	365	987
	21,	Methuselah	687		687	
	25,	26, 27	187	782	969	1656
	25,	Lamech	874		874	
	28,	30, 31	182	595	777	1651
	29,	Noah	1056		1056	
	32,	and chap. ix. 29	502	448	950	2006
	32,	Shem	1558		1558	
Genesis vii.	6	and chap. xi. 10	98			
	6,	The Deluge	1656			
Genesis xi.	10,	11	2	500	600	2158
	11,	Arphaxad born .. A. M.	1658		1658	
	12,	13	35	403	438	2096
	12,	Salah	1693		1693	
	14,	15	30	403	433	2126
	14,	Eber	1723		1723	
	16,	17	34	430	464	2187
	16,	Peleg	1757		1757	
	18,	19	30	209	239	1996
	18,	Reu	1787		1787	
	20,	21	32	207	239	2026
	20,	Serug	1819		1819	
	22,	23	30	200	230	2040
	22,	Nahor	1849		1849	
	24,	25	29	119	148	1997
	24,	Terah	1878		1878	
	32,	chap. xii. 4. Acts vii. 4.	130	75	205	2083
Genesis xii.	4,	Abram	2008		2008	
Genesis xxi.	5,	chap. xxv. 7	100	75	175	2183
	5,	Isaac	2108		2108	
Genesis xxv.	26,	chap. xxxv. 28	60	120	180	2288
	26,	Jacob	2168		2168	
Genesis xlvii.	28,			147	2315

* M. signifies in the year of the world. B. C. Before Christ. A. D. in the year of our Lord.

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Ch.	Ver.				
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29,	Noah	1056		1056	
32,	and chap. ix. 29	502	448	950	2006
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Genesis vii. 6,	and chap. xi. 10	98			
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SACRED HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE CREATION OF THE WORLD TO THE FLOOD, A. M. 1—1656.

Introduction—A Particular Account of the several days' Work of Creation—The First Sabbath—Our First Parents in their State of Innocence—Their Fall—The Birth of Cain and Abel—The Murder of Abel—The Genealogy of the Patriarchs—Cause of the Flood—God's Covenant with Noah, &c.

1. INTRODUCTION.—“The mind of man delights to go back to the origin of things. Not content with surveying the present or prying into the future, it plunges into the dark and shadowy regions of remote antiquity. Hence it is that the first step in any great undertaking, the first circumstance leading to some important discovery, the first event giving rise to the foundation of some vast empire, the laying of the first stone in some splendid edifice, the first bubbling spring in which originates some mighty river, are all invested with a deep and peculiar interest.

In ordinary cases, however, the researches of the antiquary are subject to this disadvantage, that they are attended with great uncertainty. They lie in a quarter of dim obscurity, where the fragments of truth are apt to be deeply buried amid the rubbish of fiction, and where he must often push his way by the faint glimmerings of conjecture rather than the clear light of history.

It is otherwise with the student of Scripture. He prosecutes his investigations with this double advantage, that the record he consults, while carrying him back to the remotest antiquity, even to the very first step in ‘the march of time,’ is divinely inspired; so that he proceeds under the guidance of Him who is at once the Author of all things, and the Light of the world.

The initial chapters of the book of Genesis derive not a little

of their interest from the circumstance now stated. They place everything connected with the commencement of the present system of things in the clear sunshine of heaven. They make us acquainted with the first step in the creation of a material universe; with the first man and the first woman, the original progenitors of the vast family of mankind; with the first moral constitution under which it pleased God to place human beings; with the first transgression, by which guilt, corruption, misery, and death, with all their desolating effects, were introduced into our world; with the first promise of mercy to fallen man, welling in spontaneous effusion from the fountain of redeeming love in the bosom of God!"*

Let us now proceed to unfold the sacred volume.

2. CREATION.—“In the beginning,” that is, at some period in the immeasurable depths of the abyss of that eternity which is the dwelling-place of Deity, God exerted the act of creation, and gave birth to what we call matter, which, in the revolutions of ages, he framed and fashioned into separate worlds. The Lord was “*before his works of old.*” He was “*from everlasting, or ever the earth was.*” “When there were no depths,” he existed;—“before the mountains and hills,—while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor (even) the dust (or matter) of the world.” This is the sublime and awful truth which the Scriptures teach as to the primary relation of God to the universe, and on the ground of which they ascribe to Him successive acts of formative power,—often in language highly figurative, but always meant to convey the idea of the exercise of the wisdom, goodness, foresight, and similar attributes of a *personal* agent in the Maker of the world. “The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth, by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down dew.” “Of old thou hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands.” “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance;”—“I have made the earth—the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and my outstretched arm.” See how God challenged Job to give an account of the works of Creation.” “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Whereupon are the foun-

* Rev. Dr W. Symington, Glasgow.

dations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof? Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days? and caused the day-spring to know his place? Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?" &c.—Job xxxviii. 4-41.

"Such are some of the statements of Scripture respecting the creation of the world and man. To admit these, it is not necessary to deny the revelations of science as to the physical antiquity of the globe, and the successive phenomena that distinguished the history of the pre-Adamite earth;—the point to be kept in view is, that all these were *intelligently presided over* by the Author of nature; and that they all followed in obedience to laws, which HE not only ordained, but *administered*."* "God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night: And the evening and the morning were the first day.

And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters: and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament; and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven: And the evening and the morning were the second day.

And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.—And God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day.

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night.—And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.—And God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the

* The Rev. T. Binney, London.

earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind.—And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind : and it was so.—And God saw that it was good.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness : and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image ;—male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it : and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed : to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat : and it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

3. **THE FIRST SABBATH.**—"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made ; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it : because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life ; and man became a living soul.

And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden ; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food ; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat : but of the tree of

the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it : for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone ; I will make him an help meet for him.—And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept : and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof ; and the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh : she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife : and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed."

4. THE SERPENT DECEIVETH EVE.—" Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden ? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden : but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die : for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her ; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked ; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day : and Adam and his wife " *tried* to hide " themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou ? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked. And the LORD said, Who told thee that thou wast naked ? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat ? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done ? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception: in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

Note.—"Our first parents could not justify what they had done, but they endeavoured to excuse it. Adam lays the blame on his wife—a frivolous excuse: it was no hard matter to determine whether he was to be ruled by God or his wife. Learn hence, never to be brought to sin by that which will not bring you off in judgment, nor ever displease God to please the best friend you have in the world. The religion of man after the fall, or sin of Adam, would consist in the practice of all the duties of the light of nature which were required before; and besides these, he was now called to repentance for sin, faith or trust in the mercy of God, expectation in the promised Saviour, and offering of sacrifices. This is called the *Adamical* dispensation of the covenant of grace, and it reached to Noah's flood."

5. THE BIRTH OF CAIN AND ABEL.—"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten

a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And the LORD said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden."

Note.—"Murder is a crying sin. Behold! blood calls for blood—the blood of the murdered for the blood of the murderer. There is not a more restless fugitive upon earth than he that is continually pursued by his own guilt, nor a viler vagabond than he that is at the beck of his own lusts. Those that depart from God cannot find rest anywhere else."

6. THE GENEALOGY OF THE PATRIARCHS.—"And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth. And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters. And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.

And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos. And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years : and he died.

And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan. And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years : and he died.

And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel. And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years : and he died.

And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared. And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years : and he died.

And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and begat Enoch. And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years : and he died.

And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah. And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years. And Enoch walked with God : and he was not ; for God took him.

And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech. And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years : and he died.

And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son ; and he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed. And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years : and he died.

And Noah was five hundred years old : and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

These are the generations of Noah, who was a just man, and perfect in his generations, and walked with God."

7. CAUSE OF THE FLOOD.—"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me.—My spirit

shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh : yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

Make thee an ark of gopher-wood : rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of : The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above ; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof ; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it. And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven ; and everything that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant ; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee ; they shall be male and female. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive. And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee ; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them. Thus did Noah ; according to all that God commanded him, so did he."

8. NOAH ENTERETH INTO THE ARK.—" And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark ; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female ; and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female ; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights ; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth. And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him. And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark ; they, and every

beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him : and the Lord shut him in. And the flood was forty days upon the earth ; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth ; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth ; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail ; and the mountains were covered.

And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man : all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven ; and they were destroyed from the earth : and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.

And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days."

9. THE WATERS ASSUAGE.—" And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark : and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged. The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained ; and the waters returned from off the earth continually, and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month : on the first day of the month, in the tenth month, were the tops of the mountains seen.

And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made : and he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground ; but the dove found no rest for the

sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark ; for the waters were on the face of the whole earth : then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark. And he stayed yet other seven days ; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark ; and the dove came in to him in the evening ; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off. So Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove ; which returned not unto him any more.

And it came to pass in the sixth hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth : and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth ; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him : Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.

And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord ; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.—'Those that have received mercies from God, should be forward in returning thanks, and do it not of constraint, but willingly. We are not now to express our thankfulness by burnt-offerings, but by the sacrifices of praise, pious devotions, and a pious conversation.'—And the Lord smelled a sweet savour ; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake ; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth ; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

10. GOD BLESSETH NOAH.—"And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea ; into your hand are they delivered. Every

moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you ; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And surely your blood of your lives will I require ; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man ; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed : for in the image of God made he man. And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply ; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you ; and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you ; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you ; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood ; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations : I do set my bow in the cloud—and I will look upon it, that I may remember my covenant—and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

'Here is the establishment of God's covenant with the new world. Its seal was the rainbow, which it is likely was seen in the clouds before, when second causes concurred, but was never a seal of the covenant till now it was made so by divine institution.'

And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth : and Ham is the father of Canaan. These are the three sons of Noah : and of them was the whole earth overspread.—And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years : and he died."

"God prolonged the life of Noah to a great age—twenty years more than Adam's, and but nineteen less than Methuselah's. Shem reached six hundred years, which yet fell short of the age of the patriarchs who lived before the flood. The three next came short of five hundred ; the three next did not reach three hundred ; and after that, we read not of any that attained two hundred but Terah ; and not many ages after this, Moses reckoned seventy or eighty to be the utmost men ordinarily arrive at.—Ps. xc. 10. When the earth began to be replenished, men's lives began to shorten ; so that the decrease is to be imputed to the wise disposal of Providence, rather than to any decay of nature."

EXERCISES.

1. With what disadvantages are the researches of the antiquary attended? How is it otherwise with the student of Scripture? For what are the initial chapters of the book of Genesis remarkable?
2. Who created the heaven and the earth? How was the light brought into existence? What was done on the second day of creation? On the third? On which of the days was man made?
3. What did God on the seventh day? Of what was Adam made? Where did God put him? Was he forbidden to eat of the fruit of any particular tree which was in the garden? Of what was Eve made? Why was she called woman?
4. Did our first parents keep the commandment which God gave them concerning the fruit of the tree that was in the midst of the garden? By whom were they tempted to eat of it? Were they allowed to remain in the garden after they had eaten the forbidden fruit? Of what did the religion of man consist after the fall and sin of Adam? What was that dispensation called? To what did it reach?
5. What account can you give of Cain and Abel? What is said concerning the sin of murder?
6. What are the names of the three oldest patriarchs? What became of Enoch?
7. What was the cause of the flood? Who were saved from that great destruction? Give a description of the ark—its length, breadth, and height?
8. How old was Noah when he entered into the ark? In what year of the world was it? How long did the waters prevail upon the earth?
9. On what day of the month was it that the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat? In what month? Can you tell what became of the raven which Noah sent forth of the ark? What of the dove? Whether was the dove male or female? By whom was Noah desired to go out of the ark? How long had he been in it? What did he do when he had come out of it?
10. Did God bless Noah and his sons when they had come out of the ark? Did he make a covenant with them? What was the token or seal of the covenant? Will the earth ever again be destroyed by water? How long did Noah live after the flood? How old was he when he died? How old was the world then?

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE FLOOD TO THE CALL OF ABRAM, A. M. 1656—2083.

The Great Charter of the New Kingdom of Nature—The Posterity of Japheth and Ham—An Attempt to Build a City and a Tower—The Posterity of Shem—Abram and Nahor take Wives.

1. In the close of the last chapter, we find that after Noah and

his family, and all that were with him, had gone forth of the ark, God sets the whole earth before them—tells them it is all their own while it remains, to them and to their heirs. He also gives them a blessing, by virtue of which mankind should be both multiplied and perpetuated on the earth, which should never again be destroyed by water.

2. In the 10th chapter of Genesis we have a brief account of the posterity of Noah's three sons—the sacred historian beginning with the family of JAPHETH, who were allotted to the isles of the Gentiles, of whom we form a part. Japheth had the blessing of the earth beneath. "God shall enlarge Japheth"—enlarge his seed—enlarge his border. Japheth's posterity peopled all Europe, great part of Asia, and perhaps America. All places beyond the sea from Judea are called isles—Jer. xxv. 22, which directs us to understand that promise in Isa. iv. 2-4, "The isles shall wait for his law," or the conversion of the Gentiles to the faith of Christ.—Isa. xlii. 4.

3. OF THE POSTERITY OF HAM.—Nimrod is represented as a great man in his day—"Wherefore, it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord." Some think he served his country by ridding it of wild beasts, and so insinuated himself into the affections of his neighbours, and got to be their prince. Others think, that, under pretence of hunting, he gathered men under his command, and thus made himself master of his country. He was a great ruler: he laid the foundations of a monarchy, which was afterwards a head of gold, and the terror of the mighty.—Dan. ii. 38. He is allowed to have been the founder of the first Assyrian empire, which lasted, in some degree, upwards of 1450 years, viz., from the year of the world 1800, to the year 3257. Most of the profane historians ascribe the founding of Babylon to Semiramis, others to Belus. It is evident that both the one and the other are mistaken, if they speak of the first founder of that city; for it owes its beginning neither to Semiramis nor to Nimrod, but to the foolish vanity of those persons yet to be mentioned from Scripture, who desired to build a tower and a city that should render their name immortal. We are not to wonder if we find the founding of a city ascribed to different persons. It is common even among the profane writers to say, Such a prince built such a city, whether he was the person that first founded it, or that only embellished or enlarged it.

4. At this time, we find it recorded in the 11th chapter of

Genesis, "that the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

5. THE DISPERSION OF THE SONS OF MEN.—"And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.—'This is an expression after the manner of men. He knew as clearly and fully as men do that which they come on the place to view. He did not come merely as a spectator, but as a Judge, a Prince, to look upon these proud men, and to abase them.'—So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth.—'Thus the children of men were now scattered, and never did, nor never will, come all together again, till the great day, when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory, and all nations shall be gathered before Him.'"

6. THE GENERATIONS OF SHEM.—These bring us down to Abraham, the friend of God. "Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood. And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah: And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters. And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber: And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters. And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg: And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters. And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu: And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters. And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug: And Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters. And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor: And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah: And

Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters. And Terah lived seventy years, and begat ABRAHAM, Nahor, and Haran :—and Haran begat Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. And Abram and Nahor took them wives : the name of Abram's wife was Sarai ; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah. But Sarai was barren ; she had no child.

And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife ; and they went forth with him from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan ; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years : and Terah died in Haran."

EXERCISES.

1. What did God give to Noah and his sons, when they had come forth of the ark?
2. To what quarter of the earth were the posterity of Japheth allotted? Were they confined to Europe?
3. What was Nimrod's character? Who were the founders of Babylon?
4. What did men attempt to build when they were all of one language?
5. How did God disperse them? Will they ever all meet again? When?
6. Of whom was Abram descended? Who was his father? Had Abram any brothers? What were their names? What relation was Lot to Abram? What was the name of Abram's wife? Where did Terah die? How old was he?

CHAPTER III.

FROM THE CALL OF ABRAHAM, TO THE BIRTH OF ESAU AND JACOB,
A. M. 2083—2168.

Abraham Leaves his Native Country—Goes into Egypt—Returns to where he had his Tent at the beginning—Complains for Want of an Heir—Receives a Gracious Promise—Hagar bears Ishmael—Abraham intercedes with God for the Inhabitants of the Cities of the Plain—The Trial of his Faith—Death of Sarah—His own Death and Character—Eliezer—Lot and Isaac, &c.

1. In the end of the last chapter we had the beginning of

the history of Abraham, who is a highly distinguished and very eminent character in both the Old and New Testaments. His country was Ur of the Chaldees, which he left at the age of seventy-five, according to the commandment of the Lord; taking with him his father Terah, his nephew Lot, and his wife Sarai, who was ten years younger than himself, and who, some think, was the same with Iscah, the daughter of Haran; with these he came and dwelt at Charan for about the space of five years, and from thence, when his father was dead, by a fresh commandment pursuant to the former, he removed into the land of Canaan. In Gen. xii. 8 it is recorded of Abram, that after the Lord had appeared to him at Sichem, he removed thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord. "He had set up, and kept the worship of God in his family: Wherever he had a tent, God had an altar, and that altar sanctified by prayer."

After this, because of a famine in the land, he went down into Egypt, where he was guilty of denying his wife, and pretending that she was his sister. "The fear of man bringeth a snare." Having left Egypt, he came back to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord. "He did not leave his religion in Egypt, as many do in their travels."

In the 15th chapter of Genesis, at the beginning, we find the Lord calling him by name, and saying, "Fear not, Abram: I **AM** thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." At the same time we find Abram pouring out his complaint unto the Lord, in these words:—"What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir." In answer to this complaint, God gave him an express promise of a son, that should come of his own bowels, to be his heir, and that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

In Gen. xvi. 1-3, we have the marriage of Abram to Hagar, respecting which it has been observed, "That though he may be excused, he cannot be justified, for from the beginning it was not so." Abram was fourscore and six years old when Hagar bare Ishmael to him. In Gen. xvii. we find that the Lord appeared unto Abram, when he was ninety years old and nine, and said unto him, "I **AM** the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee."

"In token of this, his name was changed from Abram, a high father, to Abraham, the father of a multitude." The first of his prayers that we have in words is to be found in the 18th verse of the 17th chapter of Genesis. "And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!" This prayer, although very short, was very fervent, and very particular; and it received an answer of peace in these words:—"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." *Note.*—It is the duty of parents to pray for all their children.

We next find Abraham interceding with God on behalf of the inhabitants of the cities of the plain—doomed to destruction.

Genesis xviii. 23-33.—"And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place."

Note.—"Abraham drew near with an assurance of faith; he drew upon God's concessions again and again; he brought the terms as low as he could for shame, having prevailed for mercy if there were but ten righteous persons in five cities. God

consented to spare the wicked for sake of the righteous, and did not leave of granting till Abraham left off asking, which proved his prayer was heard; and yet Sodom was not spared, because there were not ten righteous persons in it. We cannot expect too little from man, nor too much from God."

In chapter xx., we have Abraham's sin, with an aggravation of being the second time that he had denied his wife; and for which he made a poor excuse, pleading the ill opinion he had formed of the place and people where he was.

In chapter xxi. 33, we read that "Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God." There he made not only a firm practice, but an open profession of his religion. Though God had made himself known to him as his God in particular, he forgets not to give glory to him as the Lord of all, the everlasting God, who was before all worlds, and will be when time and days shall be no more.

In chapter xxii., we have the trial of Abraham's faith, in the command which God gave to him, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee of." "Many were the difficulties which Abraham broke through in his obedience to this command, and against which much might have been urged. The command was only intended for a trial: and it appearing upon trial that Abraham did indeed love God better than he loved Isaac, the order was countermanded; and another sacrifice is provided instead of Isaac."

In chapter xxiii., we have the death of Sarah, who being "an hundred and seven and twenty years old, died in Kirjath-arba. And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying, I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight." To this request the children of Heth made offer of the best of their burying-places to Abraham for nought. (The noble generosity of these Canaanites shames and condemns many would-be nobles, who will scarcely allow the dead to be buried within their sight.) For their kind offer Abraham returns them thanks, with great respect. Though he was a great man, an old man, and now a mourner, yet he stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land. Religion teaches good manners, and those abuse it that place it in rudeness and clownishness. "And Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan. And the field, and the cave

that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying-place by the sons of Heth."

We have next the care that he took to get his son Isaac well married. "Parents, in disposing of their children, should carefully consult the welfare of their souls." Abraham lived after the marriage of Isaac thirty and five years; and all that is recorded concerning him during that time is to be found in the first few verses of the 25th chapter of Genesis. "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age (175), an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people." His body was gathered to the congregation of the dead, and his soul to the congregation of the blessed. Nothing is recorded of the pomp of his funeral; only we are told that his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in his own burying-place, and in which he had buried Sarah.

We shall now conclude this brief sketch of the character of Abraham with a short extract from an excellent work, "The Dwellings of the Righteous," by the Rev. W. B. M'Kenzie:—

"You cannot fail to observe the distinguished honour which God put upon Abraham. When he was about to destroy Sodom, the Lord said, 'Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?' adding, as the reason of this marked honour, 'For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him.' He is a tried man. Let him be surrounded with the perplexing cares of a household, I know him, that he will command them after him to keep the way of the Lord. Personal piety in parents is the first thing. Abraham kept up domestic discipline in his family, comprising both instruction and example; the happy effects of which were transmitted in streams of blessings to the remotest generations. It was no slight honour put upon that patriarch, that he should have such a son as Isaac, and such a servant at the head of his household as Eliezer. For sixty years this faithful man was employed in Abraham's service, shared his godly counsel, and walked in his ways. When steps must be taken for Isaac's settlement in life, even that responsibility was confided, with the happiest result, to Eliezer's fidelity;"—in whose character we find another bright example of the power of prayer, and to which we shall now very briefly advert.

2. ELIEZER.—Of this old trustworthy servant Abraham took an oath, that he should not take a wife unto his son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom he dwelt, but that he

should go unto his own country and kindred, and thence bring a wife unto his son Isaac. Being fully equipped for the journey, he left the house of his master, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. Having come thither, before entering the city, we have his prayer in these words:—"O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: and let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master."—"This prayer was devout and particular, and God owned him by a particular providence. The answer to his prayer was speedy and satisfactory."—"Before he had done speaking, Rebekah, who came the first to draw water, was, and did everything according to his own heart;" upon which "the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord." And he said, "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren."

Having here met with a very kind reception, he would neither eat nor drink until that he had told his errand. "Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken." Having heard these words, he again "worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth." After which he pays his respects to the family, particularly to the bride, who, after receiving the blessing of her friends, left them, came with the man, and became the wife of his master's son Isaac—whose character we shall leave for the present, and return to that of his friend.

3. *Lor*—Who was the nephew of Abraham, and went with him when he departed out of Haran, and continued his inseparable companion in his going to and from Egypt. After which there was an unhappy falling out between their herdmen, who likely strove who should have the better pasture and the better water, and both interested their masters in the quarrel. Poverty and travail, wants and wanderings, could not separate between Lot and Abraham, but riches did it. At this time we read that Abraham and Lot both lifted up their eyes to survey the

country, but with very different feelings. Like a worldly-minded emigrant, Lot's mind was full of this life; all he looks out for is to find a good pasture land, with plenty of water, "like the land of Egypt;" which looks as if Egypt were Lot's favourite place. Abraham, on the contrary, "lifts up his eyes, and looks upon the land by faith, as God's promised inheritance, in which he was content to dwell, with a tent for his family, and an altar for God." "Lot pitched his tent towards Sodom." With a family like his, that was a great mistake. Any one who sacrifices his soul's good for temporal advantage, may be said to be pitching his tent towards Sodom. But to return to Lot. We find that hostile kings invade the country where he dwelt. His property, to a great amount, is carried away. How his family escaped we know not, but Lot himself is taken off as their prisoner. He had laid up treasure for himself, and now the thieves break through and steal.

Through Abraham's vigorous pursuit and valour, Lot is mercifully rescued, with all his property. After this merciful restoration he removed with his family from the open country into the concentrated temptations of an ungodly city; and there, as you might well expect, things grow rapidly worse. New connexions spring up, and bind them to Sodom and to sin. In admonishing Christian parents against the perils of bringing up their children with a worldly spirit, contented with a feeble testimony for God, we would say, Remember Lot—remember what religious advantages he lost—in what company he placed his rising family—what ruinous disasters engulfed or scattered them—what infamy blackens his reputation, and in what ominous silence the Scriptures omit all notice of his death! Parents! remember Lot! His name may be added to the list of those who are "scarcely saved." He is a signal instance of God's abounding grace not being extinguished by man's abounding folly. In him, too, we have another example of the all-prevailing power of prayer. When urged to make the best of his way out of Sodom, and to escape to the mountains lest he should be consumed, we find him pleading in these words:—"Oh, not so, my Lord: behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain lest some evil take me, and I die: Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live." God granted his request, saying unto him, "See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken." "Zoar was saved to

gratify him, and to shew how much the fervent prayer of a righteous man avails."*

4. ISAAC.—In Gen. xxi. 5, it is recorded that "Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him; and that he circumcised his son Isaac, being eight days old, as God had commanded him." He was the child of promise, born not only according to the promise, but by virtue of the promise. A sentence of death was, as it were, passed upon the second cause. Abraham was old, and Sarah old, both as good as dead, and then the word of God took place. Few under the Old Testament were brought into the world with such expectation as Isaac was, because in this very thing (as well as in his being offered as a sacrifice) he was to be an eminent type of Christ—that seed which the holy God had so long promised, and holy men so long expected. The sacred historian goes on to say, "And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned,"—which the Jews say was not till he was three years old, others say five. We have next the tender and touching story of Hagar the bond-woman, and her son Ishmael, being cast out; for which see Gen. xxi. 9–22. We next find Isaac in company and conversation with his father, marching on towards the land of Moriah—yielding implicit obedience to his command and will—carrying the wood for the burnt-offering; while his father carried the fatal knife and fire. Passing on together, with the utmost simplicity Isaac puts the trying question, "My father, where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" It was a melting word, which must strike deeper into the heart of Abraham than his knife could do into the breast of Isaac. After many a weary step, and with a heavy heart, Abraham arrives at length at the fatal place, builds the altar,—the saddest he had ever built—lays the wood in order for his Isaac's funeral pile, and now tells him the amazing news, Isaac, thou art the lamb which God has provided! For aught that appears, Isaac was as willing as Abraham. His submissive surrender to the will of God, when his father bound him and laid him upon the altar, is one of the most remarkable instances of the obedience of faith recorded in the volume of inspiration. "And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son." From which awful deed he was prevented, by the angel of the Lord calling unto him out of heaven, and saying, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that

* For the foregoing brief sketch we are much indebted to the writings of the Rev. W. B. M'Kenzie, and the Rev. M. H.

thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." As already noticed in the life of Abraham, another sacrifice was provided instead of Isaac.

We next find him, when forty years old, meditating in the field at eventide, when Eliezer, his father's faithful servant, was returning from Padan-aram, with Rebekah the daughter of Bethuel, the sister of Laban the Syrian, to be his wife. It has been well stated by the Rev. W. B. M'Kenzie, "That his implicit confidence in his father's judgment in the selection of his wife Rebekah, and his singular faithfulness to her in that age of lax, yet progressive morality, deservedly places Isaac's name before the world as an eminent pattern of conjugal felicity. Isaac was less heroic than his father Abraham, and the current of his life flowed in a smoother course than that of his son Jacob. Being a man of pious and devout meditation, he was also a man of PRAYER,—'He entreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived,' and in due time was safely delivered of Esau and Jacob, twin-brothers. After this we find Isaac in adversity, and obliged to change his residence, being pressed by the scarcity of provision: he had a mind to go down to Egypt, and took Gerar in his way. Here God graciously appeared to him, commanded him not to go to Egypt, but to remain where he was, promised to be with him, and to bless him: here he prospered, but fell into the same temptation by which his father had been once and again overcome, viz., to deny his wife, and to give out that she was his sister. We are ready to imitate the weakness of those we value; we need, therefore, to keep our feet, lest while we aim to tread in the steps of good men, we sometimes tread in their bye-steps. 'Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundred-fold: and he grew until he became very great. And the Philistines envied him, and stopped all the wells that his father's servants had digged, and filled them with earth. And he went up from thence to Beersheba, where the LORD appeared unto him, and there he builded an altar, and called upon the name of the LORD.'" The contest between the Philistines and Isaac issued in a happy reconciliation; but the domestic peace of this venerable patriarch was disturbed by parental partiality, as we will see more particularly when we come to the life of his son Jacob. "And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years, and he died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him."

There can scarcely be a doubt that Abraham's godly example issued in blessings to Isaac, who walked all through life in the

steps of his father's faith, and is now sitting together with "Abraham and Jacob in the kingdom of the Father."

"But unto them that do him fear
God's mercy never ends;
And to their children's children still
His righteousness extends."—Ps. ciii. 17.

Note.—"The religion of Abraham and his family was the same as that of Adam and Noah, with the addition of circumcision, and the expectation of Canaan to be given to his seed, as a type of heaven, and a trust in the promise of the Saviour who should spring from him, and bless all nations."

This was called the *Abrahamical Dispensation*.

EXERCISES.

1. How old was Abraham when he left his native country? Who came with him? Where did he first set up his altar to worship God? What was the cause of his going down to Egypt? What great fault was he guilty of there? Who was Eliezer? Who was the mother of Ishmael? To what was Abram's name changed? Who pleaded with God to spare Sodom? Why was Sodom not spared? What was the greatest trial of Abraham's faith? How old was Sarah when she died? Where was she buried? How old was Abraham? Where was he buried? Give an outline of his character?

2. Concerning what did Abraham take an oath of his servant Eliezer? Whence did he bring a wife to Isaac? What was her name?

3. What relation was Lot to Abraham? Was he his companion in going to and from Egypt? What was the cause of their separation? Who invaded the land where he dwelt? Was he taken as a prisoner? By whose valour was he and his property restored? After this restoration, did he leave the country and go into the city of Sodom? Was this a prudent step? Where did he wish to go when Sodom was to be destroyed? Of what is Lot a signal instance?

4. How old was Abraham when his son Isaac was born? Who was his mother? Was he a type of Christ? What do you mean by a type?

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE BIRTH OF ESAU AND JACOB TO THE DEATH OF JACOB,
A. M. 2168—2315.

Birth of Esau and Jacob—Jacob Buys Esau's Birthright—Tricks him out of his Father's Blessing—Sent out of Harm's Way to his Uncle—Serves him for Wives and Cattle Twenty Years—Leaves him Secretly—Meets Esau, and finds favour—Settles in Canaan—Joseph is Hated

and Sold into Egypt by his Brothers—Advanced to be Governor over all the Land of Egypt—His Brethren go there to Buy Corn—Joseph Brings down his Father to Egypt and Nourishes him—Jacob Dies in Egypt, &c.

Of Jacob it has been justly said by the author of the "Bards of the Bible," "that he is a thorough Jew. In him, subtlety, love of this world's goods, and timidity, coexist with profound attachment to the God of his fathers, and ardent devotion."

In Gen. xxv. 19–28, we have an account of the birth of Esau and Jacob, the twin-sons of Isaac and Rebekah. The struggle between the two brothers was begun in the womb of their mother, respecting which "She went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Agreeably to this prediction they were different at their birth, and different all their days. "The boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents." And it fell on a day, when Esau came from the field, hungry, faint, and weary, that he said to Jacob, "Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage: And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?—and he sold his birthright to Jacob for bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright," which was his by providence, but Jacob's by promise. Yet in this Jacob could not be justified, seeing that he took advantage of his brother's necessity to make him a very bad bargain, regarding which Esau used no means to have it revoked; but by justifying himself in what he had done, he put the bargain past recal. Thus was repentance hid from his eyes. People are ruined, not so much by doing what is amiss, as by not repenting of it.

In Gen. xxvii. 1, we find, "that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his elder son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And Isaac said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; and make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.

And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Go now to

the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats ; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth : and thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death. And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man : my father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver ; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son : only obey my voice, and go fetch me them. And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother. And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her elder son Esau, and put them upon Jacob. And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck : And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

And he came unto his father, and said, My father. And he said, Here am I ; who art thou, my son ? And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy first-born ; I have done according as thou badest me : arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son ? And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought it to me." In this base deception Rebekah and her son Jacob were verily guilty of great wickedness. The cheat succeeded. Jacob obtained the blessing, incurred the deadly hatred of his brother, and was sent by his mother out of harm's way to her brother Laban in Padan-aram. On his way thither "he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set ; and took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven ; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac : the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed ; and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And Jacob took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel. And he vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace ; then shall the LORD be my God : and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house : and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

In due time Jacob arrives in safety at the home of his uncle Laban, meets first with his cousin Rachel as a beautiful young shepherdess, about to water her father's flock, falls in love with her all at once, is kindly received by her father, with whom he makes an agreement to serve seven years for Rachel his younger daughter. When the time agreed on was fulfilled—somehow or other, by means not honourable—Laban deceived Jacob, by giving him Leah his elder daughter instead of Rachel; his excuse for so doing was frivolous, saying, "It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the first-born;" hence another bargain, that Jacob should serve other seven years for Rachel, which he did. "Love makes long services short and easy." He afterwards served other six years, having cattle for his wages. During these twenty years "Jacob increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maid-servants and men-servants, and camels, and asses."

Having met with hard usage from Laban, he resolves to return to his own country, which resolution was speedily sanctioned by Divine counsel.—"I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred. Now Jacob stole away unawares to Laban, in that he told him not that he fled." Laban pursued Jacob, and after seven days journey overtook him in mount Gilead. After some warm and bitter disputations, it was agreed that no act of hostility should take place between them; after which "Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim," that is, two hosts. He next sends messengers before him to Esau; they return to Jacob, saying, "We came to thy brother, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him." These news greatly distresses and alarms Jacob, who without loss of time puts himself and family in the best position that his present circumstances will admit of; and then betakes himself to PRAYER, in these words:—"O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD who saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea." In

this prayer Jacob's pleas are many. How magnificently he speaks of God! How meanly of himself; disclaiming all thoughts of his own merit. Those are best prepared for the greatest mercies who think themselves unworthy of the least.

Jacob having thus piously sought the friendship of God by prayer, prudently seeks the friendship of Esau by a present.—Gen. xxxii. 13. “So went the present over before him; and himself lodged that night in the company. And he arose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women-servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok.

And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And Jacob said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And he blessed him there.” After this he went on his way to meet his brother Esau, and found favour in his sight.

In Genesis, 35th chapter, we find that God ordered Jacob to go up to Bethel; and in obedience to that order he purged his house of idols, and prepared for that journey. At Bethel Jacob built an altar in honour of God, who had appeared unto him, and in performance of his vow. He called the place El-bethel, the God of Bethel. God appeared unto him again, and confirmed the change of his name, and his covenant with him. Of which appearance Jacob made a grateful acknowledgment. “And they journeyed from Bethel; and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour,” in which she died, and with her dying breath called her new-born son Ben-oni, the son of my sorrow; but Jacob, because he would not renew the sorrowful remembrance of the mother's death, called him Benjamin, the son of my right hand, very dear to me. After that Jacob had buried his beloved Rachel in the way to Ephrath, and set a pillar upon her grave, he afterwards came unto Isaac his father, unto Mamre, which is Hebron.

In Genesis, 37th chapter, we read, “And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. Now Jacob loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: for, behold we

were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said unto him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream which thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. And Joseph went after his brethren, and he found them in Dothan. And when they saw him afar off, they conspired against him to slay him. But Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmeelites. And they sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver; after which, they killed a kid of the goats, and dipped his coat of many colours in the blood, and brought it to their father, and said, This have we found: know now whether this be thy son's coat or no. And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. And he refused to be comforted, saying, I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning: thus his father wept for him." In the meantime Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites. And his master saw that the LORD was with Joseph, making all that he did to prosper. And he made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had. While faithfully discharging all the duties of his highly responsible situation, he was falsely accused to his master by his mistress, of a crime into which she had without success basely sought to seduce him. Though perfectly innocent, he was cast into prison; but the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king. And he put them into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound. And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; and they continued a season in ward. One morning when

Joseph had come in unto them they were sad. And he asked them, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day? And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you." Each of these men told his dream unto Joseph, and he gave the interpretation. The dream of the butler indicated, that within three days he would be restored to his former office; but that of the baker, that, at the same time, he should be executed. Then Joseph said unto the butler, "Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: for I have done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon. And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again: but he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.

And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed two dreams in one night; and in the morning his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the wise men of Egypt, and told them his dreams: but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh. Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day: Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker: and we dreamed a dream in one night. And there was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard, and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.

Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and told him his dreams: and Joseph said unto Pharaoh, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace. The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one. And the seven thin and ill-favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine. This is the thing,—Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: and after them shall arise seven years of famine: and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land. Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. And

let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land in the seven plenteous years. And that food shall be for store against the seven years of famine. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art : Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled : only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck : and he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah ; and he gave him to wife Asenath, the daughter of the priest of On. And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came. And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh : For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. And the name of the second called he Ephraim : For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction. And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said : and all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn ; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.

And the ten sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came : for the famine was in the land of Canaan. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him."

Here let it be kept in mind, that Joseph was seventeen years of age when his brothers sold him to the Ishmeelites ; that he was thirty years old when he first stood before Pharaoh, after which seven years of plenty had passed over the land ; hence at this time it must have been somewhat more than twenty years since they had stripped him of his coat of many colours : he being then a stripling, now the governor over all the land, accounts for their not knowing *him*. And when Joseph saw his brethren, he made himself strange unto them, and he "remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are spies ; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

And they said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan ; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not. And Joseph spake roughly unto them, and he put them altogether into ward three days. And Joseph said unto them on the third day, This do, and live ; for I fear God : If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison : go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses : but bring your younger brother unto me ; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they said one to another, We are verily guilty

concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter. And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and he took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes. And they came unto Jacob their father, and told him all that befell unto them. And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid. And Jacob said, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me. And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone of his mother: if mischief befall him by the way in which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."

When sore pressed by famine, and the urgent pleadings of his son Judah to allow Benjamin to go down to Egypt, we find the doting father reluctantly consenting, saying, "If it must be so now, take of the best fruits in the land, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds: and take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in your sacks; take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man: and God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.

And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph. And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, for they shall dine with me at noon. Then they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth. And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive? and they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son. And Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. And he went out and refrained himself, and said, Set

on bread. And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth, and the men marvelled one at another. And he took and set messes unto them from before him : but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.

And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth ; and put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses. And when they were not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men ; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good ? Is not this it in which my Lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth ? ye have done evil in so doing. And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words. Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest : and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and laden every man his ass, and returned to the city. And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house, and they fell before him to the ground. And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done ? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine ? And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord ? what shall we speak ? or how shall we clear ourselves ? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants : behold, we are my lord's servants, and he also with whom the cup is found. And he said, God forbid that I should do so : but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant ; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father."

Then Judah drew near unto Joseph, and made a most pathetic rehearsal of all that had taken place before that they had left home ; stating that he had become surety to his father for the bringing back of Benjamin, concluding by saying, " Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bond-man to my lord ; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me ? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.

Then Joseph could not refrain himself, and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him ; while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I

am Joseph ; doth my father yet live ? And his brethren could not answer him ; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither : for God did send me before you to preserve life. Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt : come down unto me, tarry not. Also regard not your stuff ; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours. So he sent his brethren away, and they departed : and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way. And they came unto their father, and told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not ; but when he saw the waggons which Joseph had sent to carry him, his spirit revived, and Israel said, It is enough ; Joseph my son is yet alive : I will go and see him before I die. And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac." By this he acknowledged God in his way, and God directed his steps. He spake to him in visions of the night, renews the covenant with him, and encourages him to remove his family, which he did. "And all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten. And Joseph nourished his father and his brethren, and all his father's household with bread, according to their families. And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen ; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly. And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years : so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years. And the time drew nigh that Israel must die : and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me ; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt : but I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying-place. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. And he said, Swear unto me. And he swore unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head"—worshipping God, as it is explained Heb. xi. 21. In his last sickness he is visited by Joseph and his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, upon each of whom he pronounced his blessing, saying, "In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh." Soon after this "Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, and hear,

ye sons of Jacob, and hearken unto Israel your father: that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days." This he did, by pronouncing a blessing, and giving a prediction concerning each tribe; and having made an end of commanding his sons in regard to his funeral, "He gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people." At the command of Joseph, the physicians embalmed his father: and when forty days of mourning were fulfilled for him, his sons did unto him according as he had commanded them. "And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company. And they buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a burying-place."

In glancing over the life of this great, good, and venerable patriarch, we find that he was not without his faults and failings: his *ups* and *downs* in life were trying and varied; his own account of which is the briefest and the best that can be given:—"Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."

Job's testimony concerning mankind in general agrees well with this:—"Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."

EXERCISES.

Who was the mother of Esau and Jacob? To whom did Esau sell his birthright? For how much? By what stratagem, or trick, did Jacob obtain the blessing of his father? Did he incur the deadly hatred of his brother? To whom did his mother send him, to be out of harm's way? Where did he first see Rachel? How long did he serve with his uncle Laban? Where did he go when he left him? Did he find favour in the sight of his brother? Where did Rachel die? What did she call her new-born son? Why did Jacob love Joseph more than all his children? Of what did Joseph dream? Did his brethren love him on account of his dreams? How did they treat him? To whom did they sell him? What did they do with his coat? For what sin was Jacob thus deceived? To whom was Joseph sold the second time? At whose instigation was he cast into prison? Did the Lord still continue to shew him mercy? Into whose hands were all the prisoners committed? How did Joseph interpret the dreams of the butler and the baker? Upon what occasion did the butler *at last* remember Joseph? What was his interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams? What did Joseph propose to do during the seven years of plenty? To what station was he exalted? Was the famine only in the land of Egypt? How many of Jacob's sons went down to buy corn? Did

Joseph know his brethren? What method did he take to prove their words? Was Jacob willing that Benjamin should go into Egypt? How did Joseph treat them when they came? What was the last trial he put upon them? What did he cause to be done before that he made himself known to his brethren? How was old Jacob affected when he was told that Joseph was yet alive? Where did Joseph place his father and his brethren? How old was Jacob when he died?

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE DEATH OF JACOB TO THE DEATH OF JOSEPH,
A. M. 2315—2369.

Character of Joseph—His Death.

In the last chapter we had not only Jacob and his times, but with them we had also the wonderful events of the life of his son Joseph, from the time that he was seventeen years of age until the death of his father, at which time he was fifty-six years of age; after which he lived fifty-four years.

Regarding these last fifty-four years of his life, all that is stated by the sacred historian is to be found in Gen. L. 14-26. —“And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren and all that went up with him to bury his father. And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him. And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them. And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: And Joseph lived an hundred and ten years. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's

knees. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die : and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old : and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."

It has been truly stated, "That the history of Joseph is a succession of scenes, constituting the finest prose drama in the world. If ever drama possessed all the constituents of that species of composition—unity of plot, a beginning, middle, and end ; vicissitude of interest, variety of character, pathos of feeling, elegance of costume, and simplicity of language—it is this."* Through all these changing scenes, Joseph looked beyond all second causes, and in them recognized and acknowledged the hand of the Almighty. "No human character exhibited in the records of Scripture, is more remarkable and instructive than that of this patriarch. He is one whom we behold tried in all the vicissitudes of fortune, from the condition of a slave, rising to be ruler of the land of Egypt ; and in every station acquiring, by his virtue and wisdom, favour with God and man. When overseer of Potiphar's house, his fidelity was proved by strong temptations, which he honourably resisted. When thrown into prison by the artifice of a false woman, his integrity and prudence soon rendered him conspicuous, even in that dark mansion. When called into the presence of Pharaoh, the wise and extensive plan which he formed for saving the kingdom from the miseries of impending famine, justly raised him to a high station, wherein his abilities were eminently displayed in the public service. But in his whole history there is no circumstance so striking and interesting as his behaviour to his brethren, who had sold him into slavery. The moment he made himself known to them, that moment was the most critical one of his life, and the most decisive of his character : the first words which his swelling heart allowed him to pronounce, are the most suitable to such an affecting situation which were ever uttered.—I AM JOSEPH ; DOETH MY FATHER YET LIVE ? What could he, what ought he, in that impassioned moment, to have said more ? This is the voice of nature herself, speaking her own language. 'His brethren could not answer him ; for they were troubled at his presence.' No painter could seize a more striking moment or displaying the characteristic features of the human heart, than what is here presented. Never was there a situation of

* Gilfillan.

more tender and virtuous joy on the one hand; nor, on the other, of more overwhelming confusion and conscious guilt. The apology which he made for their former cruelty is uncommon and very remarkable. First, as a discovery of his cordial forgiveness of his brethren; and secondly, as an instance of his dutiful attention to the providence of God. 'Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance,' &c. This was in truth no excuse for their crime. It were an impious conclusion, that because God extracts good from our evil, we are not answerable for the evil which we perpetrate. What Joseph wished, was to divert the attention of his brethren from the remembrance of a crime which was now wringing their hearts with anguish; nor was this merely a transient emotion, owing to the first burst of affection on discovering himself unto them. The same disposition is manifested towards them in the last incident that is recorded in the life of this eminent personage, than whom you will find few more distinguished by an assemblage of virtues; in the lowest adversity, patient and faithful; in the highest prosperity, beneficent and generous; dutiful and affectionate as a son; kind and forgiving as a brother; accomplished as a statesman; wise and provident as a ruler of the land. In such a character, you behold human nature possessing its highest honours. The sentiments which it inspires tend to ennoble our minds; to prevent them from imbibing the spirit of those hard, interested, and self-seeking men with whom the world abounds. Cruelty would have rendered Joseph unhappy within himself, as well as odious to others; and his name would have perished among the crowd of those contemptible statesmen whose actions stain the annals of history. Whereas now his character stands among the foremost in the ranks of spotless fame. His memory is blessed to all generations. His example continues to edify the world; and he himself shines in the celestial regions *as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.*

"When he saw his death approaching, he comforted those of his brethren who survived him with the assurance of their return to Canaan, and charged them to keep him unburied till that glorious day would arrive when they should be settled in the land of promise."* Thus Joseph, by faith in the doctrine of the resurrection, and the promise of Canaan, gave commandment concerning his bones.—Heb. xi. 22. Which command was fulfilled many years after; for which see Josh. xxiv. 32.

* The Rev. Dr Hugh Blair.

EXERCISES.

In what year of the world did Jacob die? How long did Joseph live after the death of his father? What did Joseph's brethren say when they saw that their father was dead? How did Joseph treat them? What has been stated in regard to the history of Joseph? What was the most critical moment of his life, and the most decisive of his character? For what was the apology he made for the cruelty of his brethren remarkable? Was it any excuse for their crime?

Mention some of the virtues for which Joseph was so much distinguished. Should we not try to imitate Joseph in these virtues, and make them our own?

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE DEATH OF JOSEPH TO THE GIVING OF THE LAW AT
SINAI, A. M. 2369—2514.

The Israelites Increase, and are Oppressed in Egypt—The Birth of Moses—His Flight to Midian—The Bush Burning and not Consumed—Moses Sent by God to Deliver Israel—The Ten Plagues—The Israelites Leave Egypt—Pass through the Red Sea—Pharaoh and his Host are Drowned—The Israelites Murmur, &c.

Between the death of Joseph and the birth of Moses there was a period of sixty-five years, in which little is recorded concerning ISRAEL, except "that they were fruitful, and waxed exceeding mighty, and the land was filled with them." The obligations the Egyptians lay under upon Joseph's account were now forgotten, and a king reigned in Egypt that had not known him. "And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters, to afflict them with their burdens. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born, in Israel, 'ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And she bare a son: and when she saw that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put

the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him. And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side: and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child; and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrew's children. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse him for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed him. And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water."

Note.—Pharaoh cruelly sought the destruction of Israel, but his own daughter had compassion on a Hebrew child; and not only so, but, beyond her intention, preserved Israel's deliverer. O Lord, how wonderful are thy counsels! Moses was not only well provided with a good nurse, his own mother, but preferred to be the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He now stood fair for the preferments of the court, and, in the meantime, had the advantages of the best education; with the help of which, having a great genius, he became master of all the lawful learning of the Egyptians.

When Moses had passed forty years at the court of Pharaoh, he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens, and espied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw no man, he slew the Egyptian, and boldly espoused the cause of God's people. The best exposition of which we have, Heb. xi. 24-26. "Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian." There he married Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel (or *Jethro*), the priest of Midian, and gained a settlement in that country, like unto that which Jacob gained in Syria.

When tending the flock of his father-in-law near to Horeb, the mountain of God, he was visited by an extraordinary manifestation of the Divine presence and glory. He saw a bush burning, but not consuming, and heard God in it speaking to him, and saying, "I AM the God of thy father, the God of Abra-

ham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and I heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know all their sorrows. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God, Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh?" &c.

Moses was the fittest of any man living for this work—eminent for learning, wisdom, and holiness; and yet, Who am I? The more fit any person is for service, commonly the less opinion he has of himself. God gives him His commission to Pharaoh, answers his objections, promiseth him His presence, and assures him of success. He joins Aaron in commission with him. Aaron could speak better than Moses, but was inferior to him in meekness and wisdom. They went to Pharaoh, and demanded leave, in the name of God, to worship in the wilderness. Pharaoh answers their demand with a defiance of God. They then beg leave in the name of Israel; and he answers their request with further orders to oppress Israel. These cruel orders were executed by the taskmasters, and were complained of to Pharaoh; afterwards by the people to Moses, and by him to God.

After this a strict charge is given to Moses and Aaron to execute their commission with vigour; and power given them to work several miracles, or signs and wonders, to convince the people of Israel, as well as Pharaoh, that they had their commission from the Almighty. Upon Pharaoh's refusing to let the people of Israel go, they brought ten miraculous plagues upon the king, and upon all the land, by the authority and power of God. See Exod. vii., viii., ix., x., xi., and xiv.; Psal. cv. 26, &c. These plagues, in their order, were—1. Water turned into blood; 2. Frogs; 3. Lice; 4. Flies; 5. Murrain among cattle; 6. Boils and blisters on man and beast; 7. Thunder, lightning, and hail; 8. Locusts; 9. Thick darkness; 10. The firstborn slain.

When Pharaoh and his people saw that they were all like to be destroyed, for there was not a house wherein there was not one dead, then they hastened them out, and lent them jewels and gold to adorn their sacrifices and worship.—Exod. xii. 29–36. Then was the ordinance of the passover instituted and observed, after which the children of Israel left the land of their bondage, being in number about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, fit for war, besides women and children. This mighty host went towards the wilderness of the Red Sea, as they were guided by God himself marching before them in

a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. When Israel had gone out of Egypt, Pharaoh repented that he had let them go, and with a great army pursued them to the Red Sea, resolving to destroy them. As Pharaoh and his army drew nigh, the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord, whereon Moses bids them stand still, and see the salvation of God. Then, at the command of the Lord, Moses struck the sea with his rod, and the waters were divided, and the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground : and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left. While the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them in the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen, then, again at the command of the Lord, Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea, after them ; there remained not so much as one of them. Then sang Moses and Israel a song unto the Lord,—Exod. xv. ; the most ancient song of which we have any knowledge ; admirable for its composition ; in style lofty and magnificent ; the images lively and proper ; and the whole very moving. It is a holy song, consecrated to the honour of God—a song in which Moses gives God the glory, triumphs in Him, and challenges all other gods to compare with Him.

“ Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods ?

Who is like thee,
Glorious in holiness,
Venerable in praises,
Doing wonders ?

* * * *

“ Sing ye to the Lord,
For he hath triumph'd gloriously,
The horse and his rider
Hath he thrown into the sea.”

The children of Israel went wheresoever God guided them by the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire. They moved and they rested, according to the rest or the motion of this cloud. See Exod. xiii. 21 ; Numb. x. 33.

At every new difficulty they fell a murmuring against God, Moses, and Aaron ; first at Marah, where the waters were bitter ; next in the wilderness of Sin, where the whole congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, Ye have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill us with hunger. Then and there God fed them with manna, or bread that came down from heaven, and lay all round the camp.—Exod. xvi. 4, 15–35.

Having removed from the wilderness of Sin, and pitched at Rephidim, there again they chide with Moses, saying, *Why is this that ye have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us with thirst? Then Moses smote the rock with his rod, and water gushed out in a river, and attended them in all their journeys, amounting to forty and several encampments; for which see Numbers, chap. xx.* These wanderings for their sins occupied a space of forty years during which their raiment waxed not old, nor did their shoes wear out.—Deut. xxix. 5.

“In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they in the wilderness of Sinai; and there Israel camped before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, *Go unto the people and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow; for the third day the LORD will come down in sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.* And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.” Now it was that the earth trembled at the presence of the LORD, and the mountains skipped like rams,—Psal. civ. 4-7; that Sinai itself, though rough and rocky, melted from before the LORD God of Israel,—Judges v. 5. “And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up. And the LORD said unto Moses, *Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish.* So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them. And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.” Then laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, were given by God’s own appointment,—Exod. xxiv. 12; given amid scenes of stupendous glory and grandeur, designed never to be forgotten. Moses comes down to the people, acquaints them with the laws

and commandments which he had received, takes their consent, and ratifies the covenant between God and them.

EXERCISES.

How long was there between the death of Joseph and the birth of Moses? Did the Israelites increase? How did Pharaoh try to diminish their numbers? How was Moses preserved? By whom was he nursed? Did he receive a good education? How did he act after he had spent forty years at the court of Pharaoh? What was the cause of his going to Midian? How did God manifest himself to Moses at Horeb? Concerning what, did he receive a commission from God? Was his brother Aaron joined in it? By what means did they convince Israel, as well as Pharaoh, that they had their commission from the Lord? Name the ten plagues in their order? What was the number of the men of Israel when they left Egypt? By whom and what were they guided as they marched towards the Red Sea? How passed they through it? What became of Pharaoh and his army? For the want of what did the Israelites first murmur in the wilderness? Of what did they next complain? How were they supplied in both cases? How long were they out of Egypt when they encamped before Sinai? What took place then and there?

CHAPTER VII.

FROM THE GIVING OF THE LAW AT SINAI TO THE DEATH OF AARON
AND MOSES, A.M. 2514—2553.

Moses Forty Days in Mount Sinai—The Israelites Make and Worship a Golden Calf—Moses Breaks the Two Tables of the Law—They are Renewed—The Israelites Remove from Sinai—Murmur for Want of Flesh, and are Punished—Report of the Spies—Rebellion of Korah and his Company—Moses Strikes the Rock and Gives Water—Death of Aaron—Fiery Serpents Sent—Balaam—Death of Moses.

The first act in the mighty drama being ended, Moses receives orders to bring up Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, to worship in the mountain; and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire-stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. "And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written;

that thou mayest teach them. And Moses rose up, and minister Joshua : and Moses went up into the mount of and remained there forty days and forty nights.

And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall be before us ; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. Then, with the consent and assistance of Aaron, the golden calf was made, and the idolatrous multitude danced around it. It was strange that any of the people should do such a thing. Had they not, as it were, but the other day, in this very place, heard the voice of the Lord God speaking unto them out of the midst of the fire, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image?" Had they not heard the thunder, seen the lightning, and felt the earthquake, with the dreadful pomp with which the law was given? Thus they were mad upon their idols,—Jer. i 38. What a contrast was all this to the scene which was passing on the top of the mountain between the Lord and Moses? In the midst of this wild and impious revel, the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, "Go, get thee down ; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of Egypt have made themselves a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, bearing in his arms the tables of the law. And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said, There is a noise of war in the camp. And Moses said, It is not the voice of those that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome : but the noise of them that sing do I hear. And it came to pass, as soon as he came near unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing, that he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it." Then turning to Aaron, he demanded an explanation of this strange scene ; and having received it, he went and stood in the gate of the camp, and sending his voice like a trumpet call through the host, cried out, "Who is on the Lord's side, let him come unto me!" Then all the sons of Levi separated themselves from the crowd, and gathered around him. "And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp,

and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses : and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." The sword of Divine justice is ever awful.

In Exod. xxxiii. 9, we find Moses entering into the tabernacle, and the LORD talking with him face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend. There, Moses having interceded with God on behalf of Israel, was graciously answered. " And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first : and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount. And Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. And the LORD descended in the cloud, and passed by before him, and proclaimed his great and glorious name, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty ; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words : for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel." This was now the second time that Moses was with the Lord in the mount " forty days and forty nights ; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments. And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony, he called unto him Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation, and afterward all the children of Israel ; and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai." These commands, with the exception of the two tables of testimony, chiefly relate to the fabric, furniture, arrangement, and setting up of the TABERNACLE, and occupy the book of Exodus from the thirty-fifth chapter to the end.

In all the book of Leviticus there is nothing historical, except the account that it gives us of the consecration of the priesthood, for which see chapters viii. and ix. ; in chapter x., the punishment of Nadab and Abihu, by the hand of God, for offering strange fire ; and that of Shelomith's son, by the hand of the magistrate, for blasphemy, chap. xxiv. All the rest of

the book is taken up with the laws which God gave Israel concerning their sacrifices and offerings, their meats, their drinks, and divers washings, and the other peculiarities by which God set that people apart for himself, and distinguished them from other nations: all which were shadows of good things to come. "*The reality* was the Divine 'will' its ultimate object, namely, 'The offering of the body of Christ 'once for all,' 'through the eternal Spirit,' 'without spot; the which offering we are saved and sanctified:—for it is to do that for the heart and conscience which the others only shewed to be necessary by what they did *for the purifying* the flesh."

THE ISRAELITES REMOVE FROM SINAI.—Numb. x. 11. "And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, after the children of Israel had left Egypt, that they departed from the mount of the LORD three days journey: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them in three days journey, to search out a resting place for them." "The cloud column rose from before the tabernacle, and moved into the desert; the tents were struck; and the host, headed by that mysterious pillar, in one long column disappeared in the wilderness, and that fearful mountain was left once more alone amid the bleak and barren scenery. Turned into sapphire by JEHOVAH's feet, consecrated by His touch, and baptized by the cloud of fire and glory, Mount Sinai stood the third *Sacred Mountain* on the earth." "And the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran." There the people murmur for want of flesh, and Moses for want of help; God gave both, but at the sametime punished them for their murmurings. See Numb. xi. 31.—"Moses called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted." They journeyed from Kibroth-hattaavah unto Hazeroth. Here, by the command of the LORD, Moses sent twelve spies to spy out the land of Canaan, and they returned from searching of the land after forty days. These spies, with the exception of Oshea and Caleb, "brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land which eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature, giants, and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." In Numbers, chap. xiv., we have the account of Israel rebelling against the Most High, and the fruitless endeavour of Moses and Aaron, Caleb and Joshua, to still the tumult; and their utter ruin threatened by God. There, too, we have the humble

and earnest *prayer* of Moses on their behalf graciously answered. "O LORD, pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now. And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word. And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, from twenty years old and upward, save Caleb and Joshua, because they had another spirit, and have followed me fully, them will I bring into the land, with your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and they shall know the land which ye have despised, and they shall possess it. And Moses told these sayings unto all the children of Israel: and the people mourned greatly. And they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we have sinned. And Moses said, Go not up, for the LORD is not among you: that ye be not smitten before your enemies. But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, did not go out of the camp. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah." The children of Israel now saw by sad experience, that God had excluded them from the land of promise, and doomed them to wander in the wilderness for forty years. An abstract account of these wanderings and murmurings we have in a few words:—"Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest."—Psal. xcv. 10, 11.

In Numbers, chap. xvi., we have the account of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, against the heaven-appointed authority of Moses as the leader, and Aaron as the high-priest, of the people. These men "gathered themselves together against Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD? And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment. And the earth opened her mouth,

and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. And the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the LORD; the plague is begun. And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed. Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah."

"Here we may see Aaron as an eminent type of Christ, who came into the world to make atonement for sin, and to turn away the wrath of God from us; and who, by his mediation and intercession, stands between the living and the dead, to secure his chosen Israel to himself, out of the midst of a world infected with sin and the curse." We next find that Aaron's right to the priesthood was tested by the bringing of twelve rods, one for each prince, before the LORD. "And Moses laid up the rods before the LORD in the tabernacle of witness. And, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds. And the LORD said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels. And Moses did so." "The rod that blossomed was a very proper sign to represent the priesthood itself, which was hereby confirmed to Aaron; that it should be fruitful, useful, serviceable to the church of God; that there should be a succession of priests. Here were not only almonds for the present, but buds and blossoms, promising more hereafter. That yet this priesthood should not be perpetual, but in process of time, like the branches and blossoms of a tree, should fade and wither." Here it may be observed, that before Aaron was called from among the people by God, and consecrated high-priest, that every master of a family was priest to his own household; but now, as the families of Israel began to be incorporated into a nation, it was requisite there should be a public priesthood instituted.

In Numbers, chap. xx., we have it stated, that when the whole congregation of Israel had come into the desert of Zin, there Miriam the sister of Moses and Aaron died, and there

she was buried. There, too, the whole congregation of Israel again chide against Moses and Aaron, saying, "Wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and *speak* ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must *we* fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock *twice*: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

"This must have been an offence very provoking to God, of which both Moses and Aaron were guilty, attended with strange exhibitions of human presumption and rebellion. The fault was complicated: they did not punctually observe their orders. God bade them *speak* to the rock, but they *spake* to the people, and *smote* the rock. They assumed too much of the glory of this miracle to themselves. 'Must *we* fetch water?' Unbelief was the great sin. 'Ye believed me not,'—nay, it is called rebelling against God's command,—Numb. xxvii. 14; for which rebellion the stern decree of Heaven went forth, that neither of these great leaders of Israel should ever enter the land of promise. When the whole congregation had left Kadesh, and had pitched their tents around the base of mount Hor, then 'the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, Aaron shall be gathered unto his people: for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah. Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto mount Hor: and strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son: and Aaron shall be gathered to his people, and shall die there. And Moses did as the Lord commanded.' Aaron must not enter Canaan, to shew that the Levitical priesthood could make nothing perfect; that must be done by the bringing in of a better hope. Those priests could not continue by reason of sin and death, but the priesthood of Christ, being undefiled, is unchangeable. 'Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to

make intercession for them.' 'Seeing then that we have a great high-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.'

"Methinks that Aaron knelt on the top of Hor, and, with his hand upon the head of his son, commended him to the God of Israel, with tears and intercessions such only as a parent can use. Moses, as he stripped him of his sacerdotal robes, doubtless spake of their speedy meeting in that Canaan, of which the one they sought was but the type. It was a sad task given him to take the sacred vesture from his brother, and, as it were, clothe him, while in full health, with his funeral shroud. It was a heavy trial to all—to brother, father, and son. The last embrace was at length taken, and the last prayer breathed, and the high-priest of Israel laid down to die. Glorious was his departure from the top of that lordly mountain; triumphant his last words as his eyes closed on his son, and opened again in heaven! Mount Hor is a lonely peak, seen at a great distance from the desert, and constitutes one of the landmarks by which the Arab guides his way. On its summit is a white building, called the Tomb of Aaron. Mahometans and Christians reverence it alike, and the sepulchre of the high-priest is safe from the ravages even of the Arab of the desert."* Aaron was an hundred and twenty and three years old, and all the house of Israel mourned for him thirty days.

"And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

* Headley.

There was much of the gospel in this appointment. Our Saviour has told us so, John iii. 14, 15.—“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish.” Israel, after having made several encampments, for which see Numbers xxi. 10–20, “sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, saying, Let me pass through thy land: we will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink of the waters of the well: but we will go along by the king’s high-way, until we be past thy borders. But Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his border: and he came to Jahaz, and fought against Israel. And Israel smote him with the edge of the sword, and possessed his land from Arnon unto Jabbok, and dwelt in all the cities and villages of the Amorites.” After the same manner they conquered Og, the king of Bashan. “So they smote him, and his sons, and all his people, until there was none left him alive: and they possessed his land. Now the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab, on the east side of Jordan by Jericho. And Balak, the king of the Moabites, was much distressed because of the children of Israel. And he sent messengers therefore unto Balaam, saying, Come now, I pray thee, curse me this people. And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed.” Thus, God laid such a restraint upon Balaam, that three several times, when, with great preparations he essayed to gratify Balak, and curse Israel, his intended curse was turned into a blessing, and a prediction of their future glory and prosperity. In the first attempt, when Balak charged Balaam, saying, “Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel;” the answer was, “How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied? For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!”

A second attempt is made. On the top of Pisgah seven altars are built, and seven bullocks and seven rams are offered; then Balak asks the prophet, “What hath the Lord spoken?” The answer is, “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity

in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among the Lord. He hath brought them out of Egypt: he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn. Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob: neither is there any divination against Israel: according to the time it shall be said, of Jacob, and of Israel. What hath God wrought? Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain." Another fruitless attempt is made by Balak and Balaam to curse Israel from the top of Peor, that looketh toward Jeshimon. There, as formerly, the intended curse is pronounced in blessing. "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee. Then Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he said unto him, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times. Then Balaam said unto Balak, I will advertise thee," that is, I will counsel thee. The consequences of that counsel is told in Numb. xxv.—"And Israel abode in Shittim, and the Moabites called them to the sacrifices of their gods: and the people of Israel did eat, and bowed down to their gods:" and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and was only turned away by the hanging of the chief leaders of the idolatry, and the destruction of twenty and four thousand of their followers by a plague. All this is charged to the counsel of Balaam,—Numb. xxxi. 16. Soon after this, by Divine authority, the children of Israel were avenged of the Midianites for being the chief actors in leading them astray: twelve thousand Israelites are sent to war against them. "And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain, namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also, the son of Beor, they slew with the sword.

Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad, with the half tribe of Manasseh, had a very great multitude of cattle;" and perceiving that these newly conquered districts were well suited to a pastoral people, "they came and spake unto Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and unto the princes of the congregation, saying, If we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan. And Moses said unto the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here? And Moses said unto them, If all of you go armed over Jordan, until the land is subdued before the Lord, and before Israel: then afterward

ye shall return, and this land shall be your possession before the LORD. And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben spake unto Moses, saying, Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth."

The forty years denounced upon Israel to wander in the wilderness were now about to terminate. With the exception of Moses, Caleb, and Joshua, all who had come up out of Egypt at the age of manhood had died. Notice is given to Moses of his approaching death, and provision made for his successor in the government, first, by the prayer of Moses; second, by the appointment of God.—"And the LORD said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. For ye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes. And Moses spake unto the LORD, saying, Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd.—And I besought the LORD at that time, saying, O Lord God, I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon. But the LORD said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter. Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan. But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him: for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see. And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the LORD shewed him all the land, saying, This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."—Deut. xxxiv. 4-7.

Having now gone over the writings of Moses, contained in

the first five books of the Old Testament, it may be properly stated, that the last of these is very much a repetition of the story and of the laws recorded in the three preceding books, which repetition Moses delivered to Israel, both by word of mouth, that it might affect, and by writing, that it might abide. The whole book of Deuteronomy contains only the history of two months,—compare Judges i. 3 with Joshua iv. 19—the latter of which was the thirty days of Israel's mourning for Moses. Observe how busy that eminent man was to do good, when he knew that his time was short—how quick his motion, when he drew near to his rest. Then of him it might be truly said, that his “doctrine did drop as the rain, and his speech did distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass.”

The Pen, the Pulpit, and the Press, have not been wanting in bestowing upon this illustrious personage the well-earned praises to which his memory is so justly entitled; but of all these, none is brighter or briefer, or will last longer, than that inscribed, by the *Spirit of Inspiration*, in these few words:—“And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face.” He saw more of the glory of God than any of the other Old Testament saints. He was not spoken to in dreams, and visions, and slumberings on the bed, but had free and frequent access to God when he was awake, and standing before the cherubim. In his journey through life, many and varied, trying and magnificent, were the scenes through which he had to pass; and whether we contemplate him as a man of prayer—as a hero or a historian—as a poet or a prophet—as a lawgiver or a leader to the hundred thousands of Israel—in all these relations he sustains a magnanimity of mind, and an elevation of soul, calculated to arrest our attention, and to command our admiration.

“We see the fiery promptings of the heart that could not brook oppression, in the bloody vengeance he took on the Egyptian who would trample on his brother. Preferring the desert with freedom, to the court of Pharaoh in sight of injustice, he led the life of a fugitive. Called by a voice from heaven to go back and deliver his people, he again trod the courts of the king of Egypt.

“But not in the presence of Pharaoh, when he withstood the monarch to his face, and brought down the thunders of heaven on his throne; not on the beach of the sea, with one arm upraised towards heaven, and the other stretched out over the water, while the waves that went surging by stopped and crouched at his feet; not in the midst of the raining manna;

not in the lifting of the brazen symbol in the midst of the flying serpents, while the moan of the suffering, and the cries of the dying, struggled up from the crowded encampment; not when between the mountains his stately form shone in the light of the blazing fiery pillar, while the tread of the mighty multitude shook the earth behind them; nor even when he stood on shaking Sinai, his guard the thunder, and his vesture the lightning, and talked with the Eternal as friend talketh with friend; not in all these awful relations does he appear to me so majestic and attractive as in the last event of his life.

"Behold the white tents of Israel scattered over the plain and swelling knolls at the foot of mount Nebo. It is a balmy, glorious day. The sun is sailing over the encampment, while the blue sky bends, like God, in love over all things. Amid this beauty and quietness, Moses assembled the children of Israel for the last time, to take his *farewell* look, and to give his last blessing. He made no complaints—never spoke of his hardships in their behalf; made no allusion to his anguish in leaving them on the very verge of Canaan, the object for which he had toiled so long. He did not even refer to his death. In the magnanimity of his great heart, forgetful of himself, or else not daring to trust his feelings in an allusion to his fate, he closed his sublime address in the following touching language:—'The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency!' Noble language! noble heart! Carried away by the contemplation of his children's happiness, he burst forth into exclamations of joy in the moment of his deepest distress. He looked back on the desert—it was past. He looked forward on Canaan—it was near. He turned to the people, and they were weeping. He cast his eye up to Nebo, and he knew he must die. Though outwardly calm, his stern nature shook like a cedar in a tempest, and then the struggle was over. His farewell was echoed in melancholy tones from lip to lip through the vast host, as he turned to ascend the mountain. As he advanced from rock to rock, the sobbing of the multitude that followed after tore his heart-strings like the suffering cry of a child its parent's; and it was long before he dared trust himself to turn and look below. But at length he paused on a high rock, and gazed a moment on the scene at his feet. There were the white tents of Jacob glittering in the sunlight, and there the dark mass of Israel's host, as they stood and watched the form of their departing

leader. Those tents had become familiar to him as household scenes; and as he gazed on them now, far far beneath him, and saw the cloud overshadowing the mysterious ark, a sigh of unutterable sadness escaped him. He thought on the bones of Joseph he had carried for forty years, that were to rest with his descendants, while he was to be left alone amid the mountains. Again he turned to the ascent, and soon a rock shut him from view, and he passed on alone to the summit.

"There God miraculously spread before him all the land of Canaan. He stood a speck on the high crag, and gazed on the lovely scene; palm trees shook their green tops in the summer wind, and plains and cities and vineyards spread away in endless beauty before him. But ah, methinks he saw more than the landscape smiling beneath the eastern sky. The history of the future was unrolled before him. He saw the manger of Bethlehem, and also the star that hung over it. There lay glittering in the landscape the sea of Galilee. But he saw more than the water: he beheld the mysterious form walking there in the midst of the midnight storm. He saw Jerusalem in its glory and downfall. He heard the birth-song of the angels, and shout of the shepherds; and last of all, a mysterious mount rose before him, wrapped in storm and cloud, through whose gloomy foldings gleamed a cross. The clouds rolled away; and, lo, the Strength of Israel, the Refuge of Judah, hung in death. Again the vision changed; the sepulchre was open, and, like an ascending glory, that form rose to heaven.

"The scene vanished from his sight, and with the rock for his couch, and the blue sky for his covering, he laid down to die. Oh, who can tell what the mighty lawgiver felt, left in that deathful hour alone! The mystery of mysteries was to be past. No friend was beside his couch to soothe him, no voice to encourage him in that last, darkest of all human struggles. No one was with him, but God; and though with one hand He smote him, with the other He held his dying head. How long was he dying? God alone can answer. What words did his quivering lips last utter? God alone knows. Was his last prayer for Israel? his last words of the Crucified? From that lonely rock did a shout go up, 'O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?' Of that last scene and its changes we know nothing; but when it was over, Moses lay a corpse on the mountain top. And God buried him. There he slept alone; the mountain cloud which night hung around him was his only shroud, and the thunder of the passing storm his only dirge. There he slept while centuries rolled by, his grave unknown and unvisited, until at length he is seen standing on

mount Tabor, with Christ, in the transfiguration. Over Jordan at last: in Canaan at last."*

"Shade of power not yet perished—sole lord of millions still, wielding the two tables as the sceptre of thy extant sovereignty, with thy face flashing back the splendours of the Divine eye, and seeming to descend evermore thy 'Thunder-hill of Fear,' it is with a feeling of awful reverence that we bid thee farewell!"†

EXERCISES.

What did Moses receive from the Lord when he had gone up into the mount? How long did he remain there? How did the children of Israel act during his absence? What did Moses do with the calf which they had made? How many of the people were slain that day? Was Moses commanded to go up a second time into the mount? What did he then receive from the Lord? On what day of the month did the children of Israel remove from Sinai? How long had they been out of Egypt? Where did they next encamp? For what did they murmur? What report did the spies give of the land they went to search? What of the rebellion of Korah and his company? What was their punishment? How was Aaron's right to the priesthood tested? Of what sin was Moses and Aaron guilty after they had come into the desert of Zin? Where did Aaron die? How old was he? How long did all Israel mourn for him? Wherefore did the Lord send fiery serpents among the people? How were they healed? Who was Balak? What of Balaam? What request did the children of Reuben and Gad, with the half tribe of Manasseh, make to Moses? Upon what terms did Moses grant their request? Did the Lord tell Moses when and where he was to die? How old was he? By whom was he buried? What was his character?

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM THE DEATH OF MOSES TO THE DEATH OF JOSHUA, A.M.
2553—2588.

Joshua Appointed by God to be the Leader of Israel—The Spies and Rahab—Israel Pass through Jordan on Dry Ground—Jericho and Ai Taken and Destroyed—The Gibeonites Deceive Joshua—He Conquers the King of Jerusalem and his Four Allies—The Sun and Moon Stand Still—The Tribes Receive their Inheritance by Lot—Joshua's Last Address—Death and Burial.

We are now come to that book which bears the name of

* Headley.

† Gilfillan.

Joshua, "so called, perhaps, not because it was writt him, for that is uncertain; however that may be, it is w concerning him; and if any other wrote it, it was collect of his journals or memoirs. It contains the history of under the command and government of Joshua. In it w see much of God and His providence; His power in the kir of nature; His justice in punishing the Canaanites wh measure of their iniquity was full; His faithfulness to His nant with the patriarchs; His kindness to His people Israe withstanding their provocations;—see Him as the LORD OF determining the issues of war, and as the director of th fixing the bounds of men's habitations."

Now the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, "Moses my s is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, a this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto I From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be coast. There shall not any man be able to stand before t the days of thy life: for unto this people shalt thou divi an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers t them. Only be thou strong and very courageous: for the thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Joshua accepts the government instead of Moses: the people p obedience. He then announces to the host, by under o that within three days they shall pass over this Jordan t sess the land. At the same time he sends out two men secretly, saying, "Go view the land, even Jericho. And went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and there. And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, forth the men that are come to thee: for they be come to out all the country." But the woman took the men, at them with flax upon the roof of her house, and deceive officers who examined her, with a falsehood, saying, that th had left her house, and that she knew not whither the gone. Divines generally allow that this was a sin; bu accepted her faith, and pardoned her infirmity: however in this case, we are sure that it is our duty to speak ever the truth to his neighbour, to dread and detest lying, and to do evil that good may come of it. Rahab bargained wi men for her own life and safety, and that of her kindred then let them down by a cord through the window. They i in safety, and say unto Joshua, "Truly the LORD hath del

our hands all the land ; for even all the inhabitants of the ntry do faint because of us." Then Joshua, as commander-in-chief, spake to the priests, saying, " Take up the ark of covenant, and pass over before the people." And to the ple he said, " When ye see the ark of the covenant of LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then shall remove from your place, and go after it." Then as as the priests who bore the ark had dipped their feet in brink of the river, the waters which were above rose up in eap, and the channel was left dry while all the people passed r.—Josh. iii. 17. On that day the LORD magnified Joshua he sight of all Israel, and they feared him, as they feared es, all the days of his life. Thus on the tenth day of the t month, all the people had come up out of Jordan : for the d their God had dried up the waters thereof as He had done the Red Sea ; so that the hearts of their enemies melted ; her was their spirit in them any more, because of the chil- n of Israel. At this time, by special command from the d, circumcision was renewed ; and on the fourteenth day of month the passover was celebrated, their camp was victual- with the corn of the land, whereupon the manna ceased.

Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children Israel : none went out, and none came in. And the LORD l unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye ll compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven sts shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns : the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it came to pass, on the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people uted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that people went up into the city, and utterly destroyed all that in the city." But Joshua saved Rahab alive, and her father's sehoid, and all that she had ; because she hid the messengers ich Joshua sent to spy out Jericho, and believed that God ild give Israel the land of Canaan. We next find, that God 'ered about three thousand of the men of Israel to be put to ht before the men of Ai, who " chased them from before gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going n : wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became ater." Concerning the cause or meaning of this untoward at, Joshua was much perplexed, " rent his clothes, and fell he earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the ning tide," when he betakes himself to God by earnest

prayer, saying, "Alas, O LORD God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan! O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies! For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy great name?" Joshua had not risen from his position in prayer until the LORD points him to the cause of the defeat in the sin of Achan, an Israelite, who had stolen and hidden some of the spoil of the city of Jericho, which was accursed, and devoted to the fire; for which offence he and all his family were stoned to death in the valley of Achor, or trouble.—Joshua vii. 24.

Immediately after this, at the command of the LORD, Joshua went up to Ai, with a chosen army of about thirty thousand mighty men of valour, and, by a simple but well conducted stratagem, took the city, and burnt it with fire, slaying all the inhabitants; "and the king of Ai they took alive and brought him to Joshua, who hanged him on a tree." After all this, Joshua built an altar of rough stones, and offered thereon burnt-offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace-offerings. "And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings: there was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel."

We next find, that the inhabitants of Gibeon, by stratagem and falsehood, deceive the people of Israel, who rashly make a league of peace with them, but within three days, when they found that they had been imposed upon, "Joshua called for them, and said unto them, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us? And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD."

In Joshua, chap. x., we have a luminous account of the prowess of Israel under their heavenly-distinguished Leader; of the routing of the Canaanites in the battlefield of Gibeon; of the execution of the king of Jerusalem and his four allies; of the taking of their particular cities, and the total destruction of all that was found in them. At this time God helped His firstborn, Israel, by casting great hailstones from heaven upon their enemies. "Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies." Here mark the all-prevailing power of PRAYER, and hear what the testimony of Scripture saith concerning it:—"There was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel." "The prayer of Joshua that the sun might stand still, was an instance of his unwearied activity in the service of God, and Israel; and of his great faith in the LORD OF HOSTS, and would not have been granted by Divine power, if it had not been dictated by Divine grace."

In chapter xii. we have a summary of Israel's conquests, first, under Moses, on the other side Jordan eastward; second, under the conduct of Joshua, on this side Jordan westward, who went on conquering and to conquer, until they had slain one and thirty kings. Thus, "Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses, he left none remaining, but, as far as he went, utterly destroyed all that breathed, and gave it for an inheritance unto Israel, according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war." It may be observed, that all this war, bloodshed, and ruin of the inhabitants of Canaan, was done in obedience to the direct command of the LORD GOD OF ISRAEL; hence it is not liable to be made a precedent or pretence for any other nation or person to treat their neighbours after the same manner, unless they can shew undoubted attestations of their commission from God, the sovereign LORD of all. After this "the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there." This locality was pitched upon because it was in the heart of the country; because it was in the lot of that tribe to whom Joshua belonged; and there it continued about three hundred and twenty-five years, till the sins of Eli's house lost the ark, and ruined Shiloh, so that its ruins were long after made use of as warnings to Jerusalem. "Go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel."—Jer. vii. 12. We stated in a former chapter that Reuben and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, had their inheritance given them by Moses on the east side of Jordan; Joshua now cast lots for the rest of the tribes before the LORD in Shiloh, and by the command of the LORD appoints them their cities of refuge.—Josh. xx. Notwithstanding that the lots were cast by Joshua for the inheritance of the tribes, they came out according to the prediction of their father Jacob, given on his death-bed upwards of two hundred years before that it took place, plainly shewing

that he was divinely inspired, and at the sametime proving the harmony and truth of Scripture—"The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD." Joshua, being now well stricken in years, following the example of Moses, his illustrious predecessor, calls a convocation of all Israel, reminds them of all that God had done for them, warns them against intermarrying with idolaters, gives them notice of his approaching death in language simple, yet sublime, and most affecting,—"Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you." He then makes a most solemn covenant with them that they should serve the LORD, enforcing the duty that he recommends by his own example. "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey." Those that resolve to serve God must not shrink from being singular in it, nor be drawn by the crowd to forsake His service. Those who are bound for heaven must be willing to swim against the stream, and must not do as the *most* do, but as the *best* do.

"And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance, in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash. And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel. And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph. And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son, which was given him in mount Ephraim."

Let us now pause, and reflect for a moment upon the character of this Heaven-directed, illustrious, and victorious commander, than of whom it may be said, there was none greater either before or after him. Poets have sung, and historians have recorded, the deeds and praises of an Alexander, a Hannibal, and a Wellington; but of none of those mighty men of

valour could the note of praise rise so high, as in the spotless fame of Joshua, contained in these few words :—" He wholly followed the LORD." If proof was wanting of the authenticity of the Scriptures, or of their infinite value above all human composition, the *concise* and comprehensive manner in which the greatest achievements and most solemn events are narrated, is more than sufficient to stamp their origin divine. In three short sentences we have a concise account of the funerals of three highly distinguished, great, and truly good men—Joshua, Joseph, and Eleazar.—Joshua xxiv. 30–33. Thus the book of Joshua, which began with triumphant victories, ends with funerals, with which all the glory of man is stained.

EXERCISES.

What may we see in the book of Joshua, if we read it with care and attention? What command did Joshua receive from the Lord after the death of Moses? Give some outline of the boundaries of the land which the Lord gave unto Israel. How did Rahab act with the spies? How was Jericho taken? And Ai? How did Joshua punish the Gibeonites for their falsehood? How did the Lord help Israel in the day of battle? How many kings did they subdue? What choice did Joshua make for himself and his household? How old was he when he died? Where was he buried? When and where were the bones of Joseph buried? Give an outline of Joshua's character.

CHAPTER IX.

FROM THE DEATH OF JOSHUA TO THE DEATH OF SAMSON, A.M.
2588—2887.

Rule of the Judges—Othniel—Ehud—Barak—Gideon—Abimelech—Tola—Jair—Jephthah—Ibzan—Elon—Abdon, and Samson.

We have now before us the history of the Commonwealth of Israel during the government of the Judges, from Othniel to Eli; which, according to Dr Lightfoot's computation, "occupied the space of two hundred and ninety-nine years, reckoning to Othniel of Judah, forty years; to Ehud of Benjamin, eighty; to Barak of Naphtali, forty; to Gideon of Manasseh, forty; to Abimelech his son, three; to Tola of Issachar, twenty-three; to Jair of Manasseh, twenty-two; to Jephthah of Manasseh, six; to Ibzan of Judah, seven; to Elon of Zebulon, ten; to Abdon of Ephraim, eight; to Samson of Dan, twenty—in all, two hun-

dred ninety and nine. As for the years of their servitude, as where it is said Eglon oppressed them eighteen years, and Jabin twenty, those must be reckoned to fall in with some or other of the judges." The high-priest seems to have been appointed by God, and Moses to be the chief counsellor in declaring the laws and statutes of God, the other priests being also counsellors; but the executive power of the government was rather vested in those who were called Judges, whether they were ordinary or extraordinary.—Deut. xvii. 9–12.

We find after the death of Joshua, that the tribes of Judah and Simeon went to war against the Canaanites that still remained unsubdued, and slew of them ten thousand men in Bezek, took Adoni-bezek captive, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. After this the children of Judah went and fought against the Canaanites that dwelt at Kirjath-sepher. "And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. And OTHNIEL the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim. Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years. And when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer to them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz. And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war: and the LORD delivered Chushan-rishathaim into his hand. And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died."

And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD. So they served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years. But when they cried unto the LORD, He raised them up a deliverer in EHUD the son of Gera, a Benjamite, who brought a present to Eglon, king of Moab, and stabbed him secretly with a dagger while he sat in his summer parlour.—Judges iii. 16–21. "And Israel slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men of valour. So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest eighty years."

"SHAMGAR, the son of Anath, who slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox-goad: he also delivered Israel."—Judges iii. 31. After Shamgar,

DEBORAH, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, delivered Israel from the tyranny of Jabin, king of Canaan, who had nine hundred chariots of iron. Deborah having sent for Barak out of Kadesh-naphtali, gave him the command of ten thousand of the

children of Naphtali and Zebulun, with whom she went herself to battle, and routed the army of Jabin under the command of his general Sisera, who fled from the battlefield: and having gone into the tent of Jael, being "weary and worn," he fell fast asleep. Then Jael took a hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail of the tent into his temples and fastened it to the ground, so he died. So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel. Then sang Deborah and Barak a song of triumph, which begins with praise and ends with prayer:—"Praise ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves. Hear, O ye kings: give ear, O ye princes: I, even I, will sing unto the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel. . . . Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent. He asked water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish. She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples. . . . So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest forty years."

After Deborah and Barak came GIDEON, the son of Joash. "And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, when he thrashed wheat by the wine-press, to hide it from the Midianites, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? And he said unto him, Oh, my LORD, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." After this, Gideon asked and received sufficient evidence that this commission was from God himself, for the angel talked with him, and when he had brought some flesh and cakes to entertain him, the angel bid him lay them upon a rock, and pour out the broth upon them; then, with the end of the staff that was in his hand, he touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed them. He then began his work—

first threw down the altar of Baal, the idol, by night, and cut down the idolatrous grove, and then offered a sacrifice to the LORD, according to the order he had received from God.—Judges vi. 25–28.

After this God gave Gideon further tokens of his success. At his request, God made a fleece of wool wet with dew, when the ground all round it was dry; and, at his second petition, He made a fleece of wool dry, and upon all the ground there was dew.—Judges vi. 36–40.

Afterwards God directed Gideon how to prove and model his army, selecting out of thirty-two thousand only three hundred men, each of whom, by Gideon's order, took a trumpet, and a pitcher with a lamp in it, and coming on the camp of the Midianites at midnight, they broke their pitchers, and frightened them with the sudden blaze of lamps, the sound of the trumpets, and the loud shoutings of "The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!" Gideon followed up this victory by others until that Midian was subdued by Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more. The country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon; and he died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash, his father. After the death of Gideon the apostacy of Israel was punished, not as the former apostacies, by foreign invasion, or the oppressions of any neighbouring power, but by intestine broils among themselves. None of Gideon's threescore and ten sons set themselves up for judges; but Abimelech, the son of his concubine, made himself king, after that he had slain threescore and nine of his brothers—the youngest being saved by hiding himself.—Judges ix. 5, 6. He was slain when laying siege to a city, by a woman casting a piece of millstone upon his head.

After Abimelech there arose to defend Israel TOLA, a man of Issachar; and he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir. And after Tola arose JAIR, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years, and died, and was buried in Camon.—*Note.* While those two judges, TOLA and JAIR, presided in the affairs of Israel, things went well; but afterwards Israel returned to their idolatry—they forsook the LORD, and served Him not at all; then God renewed His judgments upon them, and brought them under the power of their enemies. In Judges x. 15, we have their confession, and their earnest *prayer*:—"And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day." We have God's gracious answer, or His return *to them in mercy*, expressed very tenderly in verse 16th:—"And

they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the LORD: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel." He then gave them another judge and deliverer in

JEPHTHAH, a mighty man of valour, who delivered Israel from the power of the Ammonites. The most remarkable thing concerning this judge is, that he made a rash vow to sacrifice to God the first thing that came to meet him after his victory, and that happened to be his daughter, and only child. —*Note.* Jephthah did ill to make so rash a vow, and worse if he performed it. He could not be bound by his vow to that which God hath forbidden: "Thou shalt not kill." Jephthah judged Israel six years, then died, and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.

The next three judges who succeeded Jephthah, were

IBZAN of Bethlehem; ELON, a Zebulonite, and ABDON, a Pirathonite. The first of these judged Israel seven years, the second ten, and the third eight years.

We are now arrived at one of the notable judges of Israel—

SAMSON—and as he is held as a type of the Messiah, Israel's great Deliverer, we must notice in what respects he was so. And, first, his conception, like that of the Saviour, was announced to his mother by an angel:—"And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not; but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines." Then the woman went and told her husband what the angel had said unto her. "Then Manoah entreated the LORD, and said, O my LORD, let the man of God whom thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah: and the angel appeared again to him and his wife. And Manoah said unto the angel, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? and he said, I am. And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him? And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware: all that I commanded her let her observe. And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him." —*Note.* God hearkened to the voice of Manoah. God will not fail to guide those by His counsel that are sincerely desirous to know their duty—by *prayer*.—Judges xiii. 12, &c.

Samson only *began* to deliver Israel. David was afterwards raised up to complete the destruction of the Philistines; but our Lord Jesus is both Samson and David too—both the author and finisher of our faith. When at Timnath, behold, a young lion roared against Samson. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid. As he overcame this lion, so hath Christ our Lord conquered Satan, that roaring lion which goeth about seeking whom he may devour. After this he gave several instances of his great strength, and of God's being with him—slaying thirty of the Philistines at one time, and one thousand of them at another, with no other weapon than the jaw of an ass. And when he had fallen in love with a harlot in Gaza, the Philistines laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him. And Samson arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and thus made his escape—being a type of Christ's victory over death and the grave.—Judges xiv. 5, 6; xv. 13, 14; and xvi. 3, 11, 13.

And it came to pass after this, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah, by whom he was basely betrayed into the hands of the Philistines, who took him and put out his eyes. "Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars. And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport. And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life. Then his brethren and all

the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol, in the burying-place of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years."—*Note.* Samson, in his death, is not to be looked upon as a self-murderer, as it was not his own life that he aimed at, but the lives of Israel's enemies, for the reaching of which he bravely resigned his own. Christ was plainly typified hereby. He pulled down the devil's kingdom, as Samson did Dagon's temple; and, when He died, obtained the most glorious victory over the powers of darkness.

It requires to be observed here, that what is recorded from the beginning of the 17th chapter of Judges to the end of the book, was not done after Samson's death, but long before, even soon after the death of Joshua, in the days of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar.—See chap. xx. 28. The events also related in the book of Ruth, concerning the domestic affairs of one particular family, took place "in the days when the Judges ruled;" and the history of the two last judges, Eli and Samuel, though placed in the first book of Samuel, may rather be looked upon as an appendix to the book of Judges.

EXERCISES.

What space of time did the government of the Judges, from Othniel to Eli, occupy? In whom was the executive power vested? Who was the first judge? Who was the next? How did he use Eglon, king of Moab? With what weapon did Shamgar slay the Philistines? From whose tyranny did Deborah deliver Israel? Who was the general of his army? What became of him? Against whom did Gideon make war? How long had the country peace in his days? How long did Tola and Jair judge Israel? How did Israel act after their death? What judge delivered Israel from the power of the Ammonites? What was remarkable in his character? Name the three judges who succeeded him? Give an outline of the character of Samson? Mention some of the circumstances in which he was a type of Christ?

CHAPTER X.

FROM THE DEATH OF SAMSON TO THE BEGINNING OF SAUL'S REIGN,
A.M. 2887—2909.

Judgments Threatened and Executed upon the House of Eli—The Ark Taken—Samuel's Administration, &c.

ELI—of whom it is recorded that he judged Israel; but he is not supposed to be one of the extraordinary judges who delivered

them, but that he was made an ordinary magistrate over some part of the land. The first notice that we have of him, he and his sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were acting as priests of the LORD in Shiloh, in the days when Elkanah and Hannah his wife went there to worship, and to sacrifice unto the LORD. "Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD,"—men of sensuality, devoted to gluttony and lewdness, and that to such an extent, that men abhorred the offering of the LORD because of them. "Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel. And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD's people to transgress. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them."

Full well did their father know their misconduct, and detested it to his very heart; but he did not use the rod when he might, and now they will not obey the curb. He should have rebuked them sharply; their crime deserved it—their temper needed it.

At the advanced age of eighty-eight, a prophet of God comes to Eli, who distinctly lays his sons' iniquities to the charge of their indulgent father; yea, and heartrending predictions are given too, that an untimely death shall silence their scandalous vices, and pitiable destitution shall disgrace the withering remnant of his house:—"For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever; and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed." Why all this was to be done, God gives his reason in these few words:—"For them that honour me I will honour, and them that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." Thus God spake to Eli twice, yea, thrice, but no vigorous reformation follows. At last three messages from God came direct to him in one night, and these, too, sent by young Samuel. Now he seems to be aroused: his sleep is gone: he waits till the morning, and hears what the Lord had to say by the mouth of his faithful servant Samuel. "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I

will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth ; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And Samuel told Eli every whit, and hid nothing from him. And Eli said, It is the LORD : let him do what seemeth him good."—1 Sam. iii. 18.

"In the midst of all these threatenings against the house of Eli there is mercy promised to Israel—"I will raise me up a faithful priest." This was fulfilled in Zadok, of the family of Eleazar, in the beginning of Solomon's reign. He was faithful to his trust, and the high-priests were of his posterity as long as the Levitical priesthood continued. In all this, let us mark how faithful God is to His word, either in mercy or in judgment. When He begins, He also makes an end. In one day the two sons of Eli are slain in battle, where no fewer than thirty thousand footmen of Israel, in heaps upon heaps, lie slaughtered around them. The ark of God is taken. At the hearing of this, Eli himself falls from off his seat by the side of the gate, and expires in an instant. At the sametime his daughter-in-law, giving untimely birth to her infant, had just strength with her dying breath to name him 'ICHABOD'—attesting to future ages that Eli's indulgent spirit is the ruin of his house, and the dishonour of his country. In David's time, Abimelech, the great-grandson of Eli, with eighty-four priests of his house, were unsparingly slaughtered by Doeg the Edomite ; and in the reign of Solomon, when Adonijah formed a conspiracy against his throne, Abiathar the priest, the last remnant of Eli's race, was deposed by Solomon from his office ; 'that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.'"—1 Kings ii. 27.

In conclusion, let it be observed, to Eli's praise, that the loss of the ark was the cause of his fainting, and falling down in death, not the death of his sons. He seems to say in effect, Farewell, all in this world, if the ark and God's ordinances are gone. His calm resignation to his fate, when predicted by the prophet, is also worthy of our admiration and imitation. It is well expressed in few words—"It is the LORD." I have nothing to say against His proceedings ; He is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him.

The last of these extraordinary judges was SAMUEL, of whom we have had some notice in the close of Eli's life. He was the son of Elkanah, by one of his wives, Hannah, a pious woman, who had no children before ; "and she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow and said, O LORD of Hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the

affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and give unto thine handmaid a man-child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life. Thus she spake in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard; therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord; I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. And Eli said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son and called his name SAMUEL;" which name, some say, signifies, asked of God, others, heard of God, because the mother's *prayers* were remarkably heard of God, and he was an answer to them.

Hannah having weaned her son, prepares a suitable offering, and brings him up unto the house of the LORD in Shiloh, presents him to Eli, the priest, saying, "O my lord! as thy soul liveth, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD. For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: therefore as long as he liveth, I have lent him to the LORD." Hannah's prayer, though made in a public place, and in the presence of Eli, the priest, yet it was thus made secretly. "Her lips only moved, but her voice was not heard." What is such a prayer? It is well answered by the poet,

"PRAYER is the soul's sincere desire,
Utter'd or unexpress'd,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.
PRAYER is the burthen of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near."

Hannah having thus dedicated her son to the LORD, who gave him, she at the sametime offers him up with a song of gratitude and thanksgiving, in which she triumphs in God's glorious perfections, His unspotted purity, His almighty power, His unsearchable wisdom, His unerring justice, and the sovereignty of His divine providence. "And Hannah said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD: mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.
The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,

and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory : for the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them. The LORD shall judge the ends of the earth ; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed."—*Note.* This is the first time that we meet with the name Messiah, or his anointed, to whose kingdom it is very probable that the preceding prediction had a reference.

To return to Samuel. We find it recorded 1 Sam. ii. 18, that "Samuel ministered before the LORD, being a child, girded with a linen ephod. And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men. The LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD." In those days Israel had again returned to their idolatry ; and being oppressed by the Philistines, Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD." This he did, and offered a burnt-offering. "And the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them ; and they were smitten before Israel. Then Samuel took a stone and set it up, calling it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us. And Samuel went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all these places ; this he did with great honour to himself and justice to the people, for many years. And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel, who walked not in the ways of their father, but turned aside after lucre, and perverted judgment, took bribes, oppressed, and abused the people."—1 Sam. vii. 15–17, and viii. 1–4. Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, and said unto him, Behold thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways : now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, and he advised them against it, because God was their king ; but they still persisted, then he prayed unto the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, Hearken to their voice, and make them a king. Being thus instructed by God, he complied with their request, and afterwards, at the command of the LORD, he anointed Saul, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, to be king over them, of whose character and reign we have yet to take notice.

Before that Samuel resigned the government into the hands of Saul, he made an appeal to all Israel as to the integrity of his conduct as a judge, and what is more, as an *honest man*, saying, "Now I am old and gray-headed ; and I have walked

before you from my childhood unto this day. Whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you. And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand." After all this, Samuel, as a PROPHET, had much to do both with Saul and David as KINGS, as may yet be noticed. But, for the present, we draw our sketch of his character as a judge to a close, by observing, First, That Samuel was a *child of prayer*. His mother prayed, and received him in answer to her petitions. Second, A child of prayer is in a special manner bound to be a good child. Lemuel's mother minds him that he was the son of her vows.—Prov. xxxi. 2. Third, Samuel, when young, worshipped God; little children should learn to worship God; God will accept them, and teach them to do better. Fourth, Samuel was a *man of prayer*. He prays for deliverance to Israel. God thunders from heaven, and scatters and destroys their enemies. Again, at his earnest request, the Hearer and Answerer of prayer sends thunder and rain in the time of wheat harvest, to convince Israel that they had done wrong in asking a king; whereupon "all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask a king. And he said, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but will teach you the good and the right way. Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king."

The latter end of this great and good man, and last judge of Israel, is given us in these few words:—"And Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah."—1 Sam. xxv. 1.

EXERCISES.

Who judged Israel after the death of Samson? What was the character of Eli's sons? Did their father know of their bad conduct? Did he rebuke them as sharply as he ought to have done? How did God shew his displeasure against the house of Eli? When, and how, did Eli die? What became of his sons? Who succeeded Eli as judge in Israel? What were some of the circumstances attending his birth? How, and where, was he employed when a boy? What messages had he to deliver concerning the house of Eli? How did Eli receive them? Was Samuel willing that Israel should have a king? What was his character as a boy, a judge, and a man? Who lamented him when he died?

Chronological Table

OF THE

KINGS AND PROPHETS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL.

THREE KINGS OF ALL ISRAEL.

SAUL REIGNED 40 YEARS B. C. 1095.
 DAVID — 40 — — 1055.
 SOLOMON — 40 — — 1015.

PHETS OF DAH.	Years reigned.	TWENTY KINGS OF JUDAH.	Years B. C.	NINETEEN KINGS OF ISRAEL.	Years reigned.	PROPHETS OF ISRAEL.
iah..	17	Rehoboam	975			
	3	Abijam, or, Abijah ..	974	Jeroboam	22	Man of God from Judah.
iah....	41	Asa	957			Abijah.
ni ..			955	Nadab	2	
son of			954	Baasha	24	
ment.			953	Elah	2	
			930	Zimri	7 da.	
			929	Omrí	12	
			918	Ahab	22	Elijah. Micah.
	25	Jehoshaphat	914	Ahaziah	2	
er.			897	Jehoram, or, Joram	12	Eliah.
iel....	8	Jehoram, or, Joram (Four years jointly with Jehoshaphat, and four years alone.)	889			
	1	Ahaziah, or, Jehoahas ..	883	Jehu	28	
	6	Athaliah	884			
	40	Jehoash, or, Joash ..	878	Jehoahaz	17	Jonah.
ariah, of Je- ada.			856	Jehoash, or, Joash	16	
			839			
	29	Amaziah	838			
ariah, had un- danding visions d. 3 Ch. . 5.)	52	Uzziah, or, Azariah ..	810	Jeroboam II. ..	41	Hosea. Amos.
			784	Interregnum for Eleven Years.		
			773	Zachariah	6 mo.	
			772	Shallum	1 mo.	
			772	Menahem	10	
			761	Pekahiah	2	
			759	Pekah	20	
h	16	Jotham	758			
h	16	Ahas	742	Hoshea kills Pekah. Anarchy for some years.		Oded.
			730	Hoshea settled in the kingdom.	9	
um	29	Hesekiah	728			
.....	53	Manasseh	698			
	2	Amon	643			
ariah	31	Josiah	641			
akkuk.	3 mo.	Jehoahaz, or, Shallum ..	610			
haniah	11	Jehoiakim	610			
iel	3 mo.	Jehoiachin, or, Jeconiah, or, Coniah	599			
iel		Zedekiah	599			
diah ..	11	Judah carried captive to Babylon	588			
		GOVERNORS OF JERUSALEM AFTER THE CAPTIVITY.				
gai		Zerubbabel	536			
ariah..		Ezra	457			
achi....		Nehemiah	445			

CHAPTER XI.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF SAUL'S REIGN TO THE ACCESSION OF
DAVID, A.M. 2909—2949.

Saul Chosen First King of Israel—In the Beginning of his Reign Rules Well—Disobeys God, and is Rejected from being King—David Anointed by Samuel—Battle of Gilboa—Saul and his Three Sons Slain—David's Lamentation.

1 Sam. ix. 1, 2.—“ Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, a mighty man of power. And he had a son, whose name was Saul, a choice young man : from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people.” Saul being sent by his father to seek some asses which had gone astray, and asking Samuel concerning them, he, being instructed by the LORD, took him aside, poured a vial of oil upon his head, kissed him, and said, “ Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance ? And it was so, that, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart. And Samuel called the people together unto the LORD to Mizpeh ;” and there, by the casting of lots among the tribes and families of Israel, Saul's public election, and solemn inauguration to be the first king of Israel, took place. “ And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people. And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king.”

In the beginning of his reign he governed well, but afterwards he disobeyed the word of the LORD in several instances. Hence we find Samuel saying unto him,—1 Sam. xiii. 13, “ Thou hast done foolishly : thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee : for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue : the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.” In 1 Sam. xiv. 47, 48, we have a summary account of Saul's exploits, and his family :—“ So Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines : and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them. Now the sons of Saul were

Jonathan, Ishui, and Melchi-shua; and his two daughters were Merab, and Michal." After this the word of the LORD was sent by Samuel to Saul, saying, Now, go smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; because they laid wait for Israel in the way, when he came up from Egypt. For which see Exod. xvii. 8. Amalek then basely smote the hindmost of Israel. God then swore that in process of time he would utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek: this is now the work that Saul is sent to do. Though Divine justice strikes slow, it strikes sure. "But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and did not utterly destroy them: but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly. And they took of the things that should have been destroyed to sacrifice unto the LORD God in Gilgal. Then Samuel said unto Saul, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king. And as Samuel turned about to leave Saul, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou. And Samuel came no more to see Saul, until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul.

And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel; and Samuel said unto Jesse, The Lord hath not chosen these. Then David, who was the youngest, and kept his father's sheep, was sent for, and at the command of the LORD Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit troubled him. When this evil spirit troubled Saul, he hearing of David's skill in music, sent for him to play on the harp to refresh him. He afterwards became his armour-bearer, and when that Goliath, the champion of the Philistines, challenged and defied the armies of Israel, David, though then only a stripling, undertook the combat, and slew him with a sling and a stone.—1 Sam. xvii. 19-54. For this deed of heroism the women of Israel sung to their instruments of music, as they played, "and said, Saul hath

slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." This so much displeased Saul, and raised his jealousy and envy against David, that he made several attempts to take his life, and continued to hunt him as a partridge on the mountains.—Of these things more fully when we come to the life of David. Passing over several of the unhappy incidents of Saul's life and reign, we come to the account of his last battle, as recorded in 1 Sam. xxxi.

"Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before them, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew his three sons. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers. Then said Saul unto his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid; therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.

And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa. And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour: and they fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan; whence it was taken along with those of his sons by the valiant men of Jabesh-gilead, and buried under a tree at Jabesh, where they fasted seven days."

Upon the death of Saul, and Jonathan his son, David made a most beautiful and sublime elegy, which we here insert:—

"The beauty of Israel is slain upon the high places:
How are the mighty fallen!
Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Askelon:
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.
Ye mountains of Gilboa,
Let no dew nor rain fall upon you:
Let your fields yield no offerings;
For there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away,
The shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.
From the blood of the wounded,
From the strength of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
The sword of Saul returned not in vain.
Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
In their death they were not divided.
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.

Ye daughters of Israel weep over Saul,
 Who clothed you in scarlet and splendour,
 Who adorned your garments with golden embroidery.
 How are the mighty fallen!
 Jonathan falls in the midst of battle,
 He dies on thy high places.
 I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan.
 Greatly did I love thee:
 Thy love for me was wonderful,
 Greater than the love of woman.
 How are the mighty fallen,
 And their weapons of war perished!"

Note.—Jonathan received his death-wound from the hands of the Philistines, and bravely yielding to the fate of war, died in the bed of honour, as it is called; but Saul died as a fool dieth. And yet we are not to judge of the spiritual or eternal state of any by the manner of their death; for in that there is one event to the righteous and the wicked. All things come alike to all; whereby God would teach us, that the difference between good and bad is to be made in the other world, not in this.

EXERCISES.

Whose son was Saul? How much higher was he than the rest of the people? Where, and by whom, was he publicly elected king of Israel? How did he govern in the beginning of his reign? Why was he rejected by the Lord? From what family did the Lord choose his successor? What was his name? What was the name of the giant who defied the armies of Israel? Who slew him? With what? What effect had this deed upon Saul? Name the battlefield on which Saul and his three sons were slain. Mention some of the circumstances attending the death of Saul? How was David affected therewith? Repeat the last six lines of his elegy.

CHAPTER XII.

FROM SAUL'S DEATH TO THE END OF DAVID'S REIGN,
 A. M. 2949—2989.

David's Parentage—Sent for by Saul—Kills Goliath—Is Envied and Hunted by Saul—Saves his Life Twice—David Anointed King by the Men of Judah—Anointed by all Israel—Desires to Build a House for the Ark of God—His Sins—And their Punishments—His Death and Burial.

DAVID, of whose character we are now to give a very brief

outline, was the youngest son of Jesse, the grandson of Obed, and great-grandson of Boaz and Ruth. Of his early training little is recorded; but it may be safely inferred that it was what it ought to have been. Hence we find him, at a very early age, heroic, prudent, subject to his parents, trusting in God, and fit to be the ruler of a numerous and unruly people. We have already seen, that at the time when God had rejected Saul from being king over Israel, that David, then a shepherd lad, was sent for by Samuel the prophet, and anointed in the midst of his brethren. The Lord preferred him to all his brethren, and gives the reason why—"For the Lord seeth not as man seeth: for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." To a beautiful countenance, David added many mental and natural accomplishments. A summary of these we have from one of Saul's servants, who said, "I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and," to finish the climax, "the Lord is with him." Upon hearing of this, Saul sent for him, "and David came and stood before him; and he became his armour-bearer. And it came to pass, when the evil spirit was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and the evil spirit departed from him." When Saul had no further occasion to use David for the relief of his distemper, he returned to keep his father's sheep, preferring the rural retirements of a pastoral life to all the gaieties and pleasures of the court. It is not improbable, that during this pastoral retirement he composed the 23d Psalm, exhibiting (as it is well said by Dr Blair,) "the pleasing picture of a heart overflowing with gratitude, and rejoicing in the goodness of Heaven. Reviewing the past part of his life, he contemplates God as his shepherd, who hath made him lie down in green pastures, and led him beside the still waters. Considering the present, he beholds his Divine benefactor preparing a table for him in the presence of his enemies, and making his cup run over. Looking forward to the future, he confides in the same goodness as continuing to follow him all the days of his life, and bringing him to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. With perfect composure and serenity he looks forward to the time when he is to pass through the valley and shadow of death, and even there he fears no evil. Such is the happy distinction which good men enjoy in a situation the most formidable to human nature." These were the palmy days of the "sweet psalmist of Israel," and they were fast hastening to a close. Hence we find in 1 Sam. xvii. 20, that, in obe-

dience to the command of his father, "David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle. For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army." Here David, not only like our modern "Norval," had *heard* of battles, and longed to follow to the field some "warlike hero," but he becomes the leading hero himself; and with the home-heart feelings of a brother, and the patriotic heroism of a trueborn Israelite, he runs into the army and salutes his brethren. "And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion of the Philistines," repeating his challenge, saying, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." When David heard this proud boaster, he said, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" Upon his putting this natural and interesting question, the jealousy, envy, and anger of Eliab, his eldest brother, is kindled, and he tauntingly asks David, "Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause? And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had. And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone; but there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled."—*Note.* Eliab tauntingly charged David with having come to see the battle, but David came and fought the battle. His victory over Goliath was typical of the triumphs of the Son of David over Satan and all the powers of darkness, whom he spoiled, and made a shew of them openly.—Col. ii. 15.

One would have thought that such a victory gained by David over the enemies of Israel, would have won for him the unfeigned gratitude and lasting esteem of Saul, their sovereign. Instead of this, the malignity of his nature displayed itself in rendering evil for good, hatred for love, deceit for fidelity. Hence it is recorded, 1 Sam. xviii. 9, "And Saul eyed David from that day and forward." And again, ver. 29, "And Saul became David's enemy continually." And again, in 1 Sam. xix., we have an account of four narrow escapes which David made for his life. First, by the mediation of Jonathan, who loved David as he loved his own soul; second, by his own activity; third, by Michal's fidelity and ingenuity; and lastly, by a change, for the time, being wrought upon Saul; but it was for a short time. Hence we find it recorded in 1 Sam., chap. xx., that when Jonathan had sounded his father in regard of his intentions towards David, he knew that he was determined to slay him. Jonathan made this known to David, whereupon they swore eternal friendship, parted in sorrow, Jonathan saying unto David, "Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And David arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city." The separation of these two trusty friends and faithful lovers was equally trying and heartrending to them both, yet David's situation was the more deplorable; for, when Jonathan was returning to his family and his friends, David was going out an exile, persecuted without any just cause, leaving society, and all its comforts. Placed under such a load of pressing circumstances, it is no great wonder that we find David breaking down, and giving way to temptations, and imposing upon Ahimelech the priest, and also upon Achish the king of Gath, before whom he played the fool, and played his part so well as to gain his object, and to make Achish say unto his servants, "Lo, ye see the man is mad: Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?" Thus Achish drove him away, as it is in the title of Psalm xxxiv., which David penned upon this occasion, and shews that he did not change his spirit when he changed his behaviour. Shortly after this he sets up his standard in the cave of Adullam, "and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. And every one that was in distress, and in debt, and discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men." It was at this time that David penned the 142d

Psalm, which is entitled, "A prayer when he was in the cave," in which he complains that no man would know him, and that refuge failed him, but hopes that shortly the righteous would compass him about. It was at this time that Saul commanded Doeg the Edomite to smite Nob, the city of the priests, and to slay fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod; all which he did. In the midst of all this hurry and distraction, David found both time and a heart to hold communion with God, and on this occasion composed the 52d Psalm. In 1 Sam., chap. xxiii., we have it related how David rescued the city of Keilah from the Philistines, and was betrayed by its inhabitants, visited by Jonathan in the wood of Hachilah, betrayed by the Ziphites, after which he made his escape from Saul, and for the present went and dwelt in strongholds at En-gedi, which, according to Dr Lightfoot, was the wilderness of Judah, in which David was when he penned the 63d Psalm, which is full of deep-toned piety and devout affection. David was now in a wilderness, and yet his heart much enlarged in blessing God. After this "Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily." David could now prove to Saul that he designed him no harm. He held up the skirt of Saul's robe, and said, "Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord hath delivered thee to-day into my hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth my hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed. Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in my hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it. The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee: and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand; but mine hand shall not be upon thee." For the present, Saul was so affected by David's magnanimity that he wept, and said, "Is this thy voice, my son David? Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil." And Saul said to David, "I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. Swear now therefore unto me by the Lord, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not

destroy my name out of my father's house. And David swore unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold." From these circumstances now stated, one would be ready to think that Saul would not have hunted any more after the life of David; but it was not so. In 1 Sam. xxvi. 2, we find Saul with three thousand chosen men of Israel seeking after David in the wilderness of Ziph. "And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him. Then said David, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go. So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster. Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once. And David said, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless? David also said, As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish." We have already seen that this prediction was fulfilled on the battlefield of Gilboa. At this time David said to Abishai, "I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go." And they did so, "and gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it; because a deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them. Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of an hill afar off, and cried to Abner (in ridicule), Art not thou a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? As the LORD liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the LORD's anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster. And Saul knew David's voice, and said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And David said, It is my voice, my lord, O king. And David said to Saul, Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in mine hand? wherefore is the king of Israel come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains? Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly. Blessed be thou, my son David: *thou shalt both do great things, and shalt prevail.* So David

went on his way, and Saul returned to his place." This was the last time that David and Saul ever met.

About this time David was guilty of mistrusting God, despairing of safety, and, with an army of six hundred men, joining himself with Achish, king of Gath, and requesting from him some small city wherein they might live by themselves. "And Achish gave him Ziklag: wherefore Ziklag belongeth to the kings of Judah unto this day. And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was a full year and four months. Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek to fight against Israel: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel. And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds and by thousands: but David and his men passed on in the rereward with Achish. Then said the princes of the Philistines, What do these Hebrews here? make this fellow (David) return, that he may go to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? should it not be with the heads of these men?" With this request Achish complied. "So David and his men returned into the land of the Philistines: and the Philistines went up to Jezreel."

Note.—David, by his quitting the land of Judah, and going among the uncircumcised, had brought himself into a great strait. "If, when the armies engaged, he should quit his post, he would fall under the indelible reproach, not only of cowardice and treachery, but of base ingratitude to Achish. If he should, as was expected from him, fight for the Philistines against Israel, he would incur the imputation of being an enemy to the Israel of God, a traitor to his country, unworthy of the name of an Israelite, much more of the honour and trust of a king of Israel. Those that associate themselves with wicked people, it is strange if they come off without guilt or grief, or both."

On the third day after David and his men had left the camp of the Philistines they came to Ziklag, and, behold, it was burnt with fire: and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives. "And David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all." David and his men went and succeeded, even as the Lord had said; and when David had returned to Ziklag, "He sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, even to his friends, saying, Behold a present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the Lord."—1 Sam. xxx. 26.

As Saul was now dead, "David inquired of the Lord, saying,

Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the LORD said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron. And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah." But the other tribes of Israel did not yet choose David for their king. "Then Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, took Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim; and there he, and the chief of all the tribes of Israel, except the tribe of Judah, made him their king. Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker. Then Abner sent messengers to David, saying, Make a league with me, and, behold, my hand shall be with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee. So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him. And David made Abner and the men that were with him a feast. And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league between me and thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace." When Joab knew what had taken place, he sent messengers, and brought Abner back to Hebron, "and took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died; because he had slain Asahel his brother at Gibeon, in the battle. When David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever from the blood of Abner. And they buried Abner in Hebron. And king David himself followed the bier." And at the grave of Abner he lifted up his voice, and wept, saying, "Died Abner as a fool dieth? Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: as a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou." When Ish-bosheth heard that Abner was dead, he and all Israel were discouraged because they had lost their leader. At this time two of the captains of Ish-bosheth entered his bed-chamber, and as he lay upon his bed they murdered him, and carried his head to David, thinking that he would reward them for their cruelty; but he, rightly, caused them to be put to death.

DAVID ANOINTED KING BY ALL ISRAEL.—"Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel. So all the elders of Israel came to Hebron; and king David made a league with them before the

LORD: and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years and six months. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah."

At this time there was a city on the northern boundary of Judah, and the southern boundary of Benjamin, which was still in the possession of the Jebusites. It had formerly been called Salem, but now was called Jebus, and afterward by David called Jerusalem, the capital city of the land of Israel. Here the Jebusites had built a strong fort. Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion, and dwelt in it: and called it the city of David. And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him. And there were sons and daughters born to him in Jerusalem.—2 Sam. v. 13.

As soon as the Philistines heard that all Israel had anointed David to be their king, they sent their armies into the country to fight against Israel; "and David inquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand." And it was so, even as the LORD had said, for at this time David conquered them once and again: and drove them out of the country.

The ark of God, in which lay the two tables of stone, upon which were written the ten commandments, the pot of manna, and the rod of Aaron, being at Kirjath-jearim, David now, by the direction of God, brought it to Jerusalem in triumph, and placed it in Zion, where he had for it prepared a tabernacle. For the account of which see 2 Sam. vi. 1-17; 1 Chron. xiii. 5, 6, and xv. 1-29. As David and the thousands of Israel were going up the mountain with the ark, it is supposed by some that they sung the 24th Psalm, the different choirs answering each other in the following order:—

1ST CHOIR.—Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD?
And who shall stand in his holy place?

2D CHOIR.—He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;
Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity,
Nor sworn deceitfully.

"When they came to the gates of the tabernacle that king David had prepared for the ark, the Levites probably separated into two choirs, and the ark was carried in between them, while they sang"—

BOTH CHOIRS.—Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory shall come in.

1ST CHOIR.—Who is this King of glory?

2D CHOIR.—The LORD strong and mighty,
The LORD mighty in battle.

BOTH CHOIRS.—Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory shall come in.

1ST CHOIR.—Who is this King of glory?

2D CHOIR.—The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory.

Whether this was the order or not we cannot say. But of this we are certain, from 1 Chron. xvi. 7, "On that day David delivered first *this psalm*, to thank the LORD, into the hand of Asaph and his brethren," beginning with, "Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people," &c. It is gathered out of several psalms. From the beginning to ver. 23, is taken from Psalm cv. 1, &c., and then ver. 23 to ver. 34 is the whole of Psalm xcvi., and the two last verses are taken from the close of Psalm cvi. When the ark was set in its place, David blessed all the people, and having distributed refreshments among them, he appointed four thousand Levites to be constantly employed in singing praises to God, and playing on musical instruments before the tabernacle; these he divided into companies, under the direction of Asaph, Hermon, and Jeduthun. This being done, he had a mind to build a house for the ark of God, which had hitherto dwelt in curtains.—2 Sam. vii. 2, 3. But God would not accept of his design, because he had shed much blood; but he promised that he should have a son, who should build him an house.—2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. And in 2 Sam. viii. 1–14, we have an account of his victories over his enemies. "And David reigned over all Israel; and he executed judgment and justice to all his people. And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; and Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Seraiah was the scribe. And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites," who were the king's guards. And David's sons, as they came of age, helped him to rule the people. Now David was very rich and powerful, and the Israelites were feared and respected by their neighbours. "Every morning and evening the smoke of sacrifices rose from the altar on Mount Zion, and from the altar which stood before the tabernacle of Moses at Gibeon. There songs of praise to God were heard from the choirs of Levites, accompanied by the sound of the harp, the psaltery, and the cymbal, making loud and cheerful music."

In the midst of all this prosperity, "David, the beloved of the Lord," was permitted to fall, to fall disgracefully, into the foul

sin of adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of the gallant Uriah, whom he afterwards caused to be basely deserted and slain.—2 Sam. xi. 15. For this sin David testified his sincere repentance in the 51st Psalm; yet God saw it proper to punish him severely, because he had given the enemies of God cause to blaspheme.—2 Sam. xii. 14. On account of this sin David was visited with sore trials in his own family, namely, in the case of his three sons, Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah. For the case of Amnon, see 2 Sam. xiii. For the rebellion of Absalom against his father, see 2 Sam. xiv. and xv. Another chief blemish in the life of David besides his connection with Bathsheba, and the death of her husband, was, that in the pride of his heart he numbered all the people of the tribes of Israel, in order that he might know how great a king he was. For which sin God gave him leave to choose one of these three punishments:—either seven years famine, or three months of war, or three days pestilence. “And David said unto Gad (the seer), I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man. So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men.”—2 Sam. xxiv. 14, 15.

In 1 Kings, chap. i., we find, when David was old, and declining in his health, then Adonijah his son, by Haggith, “exalted himself, saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. And he conferred with Joab and Abiathar the priest; and they following Adonijah helped him.” But by the designation both of God and David, Solomon was to be the man that should fill the throne. Hence at the instigation of Bathsheba his mother, and Nathan the prophet, “David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king. And he said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon: and let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon. And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet, and piped with pipes, and all the people rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them. Then said David, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which hath given *one* to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it. Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and

he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; and keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: that the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel." David also gave Solomon charge concerning Joab and Shimei; all which, we will afterwards find, he executed. "So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David."—1 Kings ii. 10.

Having thus briefly taken notice of the most remarkable events in the life of David, king of Israel, I shall now conclude by giving a summary view of his character, extracted from the Rev. G. Gilfillan's "Bards of the Bible," of whom that master of description writes thus:—

"At first we find him as simple and noble a child of God, nature, and genius, as ever breathed. And yet this boy had done, even ere he went to the camp of Israel, one deed of 'derring-do;' he had wet his hands in the blood of a lion and a bear. We can conceive few subjects fitter for picture or poetry, than that of the young David measuring the mass of steel—Goliath—with an eye which mingled in its ray, wonder, eagerness, anger, and

‘That stern joy which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel.’

A hundred battles looked forth in that lingering, longing, insatiate glance. Every one knows the result to the giant of Gath: he fell before the smooth sling-stone. The result on David's mind is not quite so evident; but we think, that all the praises and promotion he received did not materially affect the simplicity of his habits, or the integrity of his purposes. Nor did at first the persecution of Saul much exasperate his spirit, balanced as that was by the love of Jonathan. But his long continued flight and exile—the insecurity of his life—the converse he had with 'wild men and wild usages' in the cave of Adullam, and the wilderness of Ziph, although they failed in weaning him from his God, or his Jonathan, or even from Saul—did not fail somewhat to imbitter his generous nature, and to render him less fitted for bearing the prosperity which suddenly brake upon him. More men are prepared for sudden death than for sudden success. When he had brought up the ark of the LORD to the city of David—when the Philistines were bridled,

the Syrians smitten, the Ammonites chastised, and their city upon the point of being taken—from this very pride of place David fell—fell disgracefully—but fell not for ever. From that hour his life ran on in a current of disaster, chequered with splendid successes. It was a tract of irregular and ragged glory, tempering at last into a troubled yet beautiful sunset. David retained to the last his heart, his intellect, his simplicity, his devotion—above all, his sincerity; loved his God; saw from afar off his Redeemer; and let the man, who is ‘without sin’ among his detractors, cast the first stone. His character is chequered, but the stripes outnumber the stains, and the streaks of light outnumber both. * * *

“The piety of the Psalms is altogether inexplicable, except on the theory of a peculiar inspiration. The touched spirit of David, whether wandering in the desert, or seated in his own palace, whether in defeat or victory, whether in glory or in deep guilt, turns instinctively to heaven. Wild, holy, tameless strains, how have ye run down through ages, in which large poems, systems, and religions have perished, firing the souls of poets, kissing the lips of children, smoothing the pillows of the dying, storming the warrior to heroic rage, perfuming the chambers of solitary saints, and clasping into one the hearts and voices of thousands of assembled worshippers; tinging many a literature, and finding a home in many a land; and still ye seem as fresh and young and powerful as ever; yea, preparing for even mightier triumphs than when first chanted! Britain, Germany, and America, now sing you; but you must yet awaken the dumb millions of China and Japan.”

EXERCISES.

What relation was David to Ruth? What was the character which one of Saul's servants gave of David? For what purpose was David first sent for by Saul? Who was it that then defied and challenged the armies of Israel? Who accepted the challenge and gained the victory? Did Saul love him on account of his courage and success? Did Jonathan love David? Before whom did David play the madman? When, and where, did David cut off the skirt of Saul's robe? Might he not have cut off his head? Mention another time, and place, where David might have destroyed Saul? Did David do right in joining himself to Achish, king of Gath? By whom was Abner slain? What became of Ish-bosheth? Where was David anointed king by all Israel? What was the first thing he did when he came to the stronghold of Zion? Where was the ark of God at this time? What did David design to do for the ark? Why did God not accept of his design? Had David any wars after this? In what manner did he govern Israel? What were the two great sins of his life? How was he punished for the first of these crimes? How for the second? What took place in

David's family when he was old and declining in health? In what manner was Solomon anointed to be king over Israel? What was his father's last charge to him? Where was David buried? Give a summary account of his character.

CHAPTER XIII.

FROM THE DEATH OF DAVID TO THE DEATH OF SOLOMON, A.M.
2989—3029.

The Lord appearing to Solomon in a Dream—Solomon's Request—God's Answer—The Extent of his Vast Dominions—The Pomp of his Establishment—His Friendly Relations with Hiram, king of Tyre—The Number of his Masons—The Variety of his Gifts and Accomplishments—The Richness and Diversified Character of his Writings—His Going Astray—His Punishment—His Death and Burial—The Opinion of the Church concerning his Last End.

Towards the close of the last chapter we found that Adonijah had attempted to fill the throne of his father, in which attempt he was aided by Joab and Abiathar. Upon Adonijah's finding that Solomon was made king, and that all the people shouted for joy, he was afraid on account of what he had done, and went and caught hold of the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me to-day, that he will not slay his servant with the sword. Solomon spared him for that time, though for another offence he put him to death.—1 Kings i. 50–53, and ii. 2–24. "Then Solomon sat upon the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was established greatly." And we find him executing all the charge that his father gave him concerning Adonijah, Abiathar, Joab, and Shimei. Adonijah had aimed at the crown, and Solomon did not consider himself safe while he lives. "Many a head has been lost by catching at a crown." The slaying of Abiathar was the fulfilling of the threatening against the house of Eli.—1 Sam. ii. 30. He was the last priest of that family. God's judgments, though not executed speedily, will be executed surely.

In 1 Kings, chap. iii., we have an account of Solomon's marriage to Pharaoh's daughter, with a general view of his religion. "In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king in-

stead of David my father : and I am but a little child : I know not how to go out or come in. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life ; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor the life of thine enemies ; behold, I have done according to thy words : lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour." Solomon has wisdom given him because he did ask it, and wealth because he did not. We have the first display of Solomon's wisdom in deciding between two harlots, who came to him concerning a dead and a living child. " And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged : for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment." We have next an account of his princes, officers, the territories of his kingdom, which were large, and its tributaries, which were many. " Judah and Israel were as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking"—very many, very merry. " And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms, from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt : they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life." All the princes from the river Euphrates, north-east, to the border of Egypt, south-west, not only added to his honour by doing him homage, and holding their crowns from him, but added to his wealth, by serving him, and bringing him presents. " And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallow deer, and fatted fowl. He had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. And he spake three thousand proverbs : and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall : he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes."

In 1 Kings, chap. v., we have a statement of the friendly intercourse between Solomon and Hiram, king of Tyre :—" So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all his desire. And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil : thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year. And

they two made a league together. And Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses: a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home. And Solomon had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders, and the stone squarers, prepared timber and stones to build the house of the LORD."

For a particular description of the dimensions of the temple and its furniture, as well as of his own house, and the house of the forest in Lebanon, see 1 Kings vi. and vii.

In chap. viii., we have the dedication of the temple, with the bringing in of the ark. Solomon having made an humble acknowledgment of the incapacity of the house which he had built to contain God, prays that God would graciously hear and answer the prayer he was then praying—a prayer made in faith, long, humble, particular, and fervent. Having, in his supplications, specified and particularised almost every situation and circumstance in which he, as king, and Israel, as subjects, might in future be placed, "he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees, with his hands spread up to heaven. And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant. The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us: that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his statutes and his judgments, and to keep his commandments, as at this day." Never were words more fitly spoken—never was congregation dismissed with that which was more likely to affect them.

In chap. ix., we have the answer which God, in a vision, gave to Solomon's prayer:—"And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee

a man upon the throne of Israel. But if ye shall at all turn from following me, you or your children, and will not keep my commandments and statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them : then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them ; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight ; and Israel shall be a proverb and a by-word among all people : and at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss ; and they shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house ? And they shall answer, Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them ; therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil." "If we perform our part of the covenant, God will not fail to perform His. He gave Solomon fair warning that he and his people might not be high-minded, but fear." But, alas ! we find it recorded in the 11th chapter of 1st Kings, "King Solomon loved many strange women, of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you : for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods : Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives ; and they turned away his heart. And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel. Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant." "Upon this message which God graciously sent to Solomon to awaken his conscience, and bring him to repentance, we have reason to hope (says Matthew Henry), that he humbled himself before God, confessed his sin, begged pardon, and returned to his duty ; that he then published his repentance in the book of Ecclesiastes." In which book we have a concise autobiography of the royal preacher (who spake thus) :—

"I the preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven : this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun ; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit. That which is crooked cannot be made straight : and that which is wanting cannot be numbered. I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all

they that have been before me in Jerusalem : yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge. And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly : I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief : and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure : and, behold, this also is vanity. I said of laughter, It is mad : and of mirth, What doeth it ? I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom ; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life. I made me great works ; I builded me houses ; I planted me vineyards : I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits : I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees : I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house ; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me. I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces : I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem : also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy ; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour : and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do : and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.”—Eccles. i. 12–18, ii. 1–11. “And the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon ? And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father : and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.”

We shall now draw this lesson to a close by three brief extracts ; the first of these from one who, though dead, yet speaketh thus :—“Never did the crown of Israel shine so bright as it did when Solomon wore it ; nor was that kingdom ever so glorious a type of the kingdom of the Messiah. Is it not strange, that one who had so often and so plainly warned others of the danger of the love of women, should himself have been so wretchedly bewitched by them ? Never was gallant ship so

wrecked—never was crown so profaned. It is easier to see a mischief and shew it to others, than to shun it ourselves. ‘Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.’” *

“Solomon, in his youth, as is well known, was eminent for his piety. Even from his birth, it is testified that ‘the Lord loved him;’ in token of which He sent the prophet Nathan to give him the significant name of Jedidiah—that is, ‘Beloved of the Lord.’ And (1 Kings iii. 3) we read of him, that ‘he loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father.’ While he was yet unborn, it had been told concerning him that he should be a man of rest, and that the Lord would give him rest from all his enemies round about, and would give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. War keeps nations jealously apart; peace draws them, in a thousand ways, into friendly intercourse with one another. Never, accordingly, either before or after, did ancient Israel occupy so eminent and influential a place among the neighbouring kingdoms as during Solomon’s illustrious reign. Her people multiplied, her commerce flourished, her wealth immensely increased; so that, as we read (1 Kings x. 23, 24), ‘King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom. And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.’ There was scarcely any branch of knowledge with which his acquaintance was not extensive and profound. He had studied with equal assiduity the works and word of God. . . .

“At what precise period his piety began to fade, the Scripture history does not distinctly indicate. There seems no reason to doubt, however, that its decay was gradual and progressive. The Lord, in His mysterious providence, permitted His own Jedidiah to forsake Him for a season, and to go after other gods, that in His own time and way He might bring the wanderer back, to tell the men of all aftertimes, and to tell it as one who had authority to speak, what he had found. And this, at his return, is the sum of that truth which, in the book of Ecclesiastes, he has given by inspiration to the world—THAT WITHOUT GOD, AND AWAY FROM GOD, ALL IS VANITY AND VEXATION OF SPIRIT. And were it not that this book has been handed down to us among the Scriptures of truth, we might have seemed to be shut up to the mournful conclusion, that he had gone to the grave in a state of hopeless and final estrangement from God. But this book is the cheering and decisive evidence, that before his sun went down, the clouds which for a season

* Rev. Matthew Henry.

covered it had rolled away, and that its setting was bright with the radiance of life and immortality."*

"No monarch in history can be compared, on the whole, with Solomon—magnificence being the main quality of Israel's great king. The spring-tide of success which was his history—the abundance of his peace—his inexhaustible wealth—the pomp of his establishment—the splendour of the house, and the temple which he built—the variety of his gifts and accomplishments—the richness and diversified character of his writings, and the manifold homage paid him by surrounding tribes and monarchs—all proclaimed him 'the grand monarch of Palestine,' and have rendered 'Solomon and his glory' proverbial to this hour. It was he that first proved to the world, that peace has greater triumphs and richer glories than war. All the useful as well as the elegant arts found in him at once a pattern and a patron. But every man has a dark period in his career, whether it is publicly known or concealed. Solomon, too, had his 'hour and power of darkness.' Stern justice forbids us to wink at its principal cause. It was luxury aggravated into sin. Fulness of bread, security, splendour, wealth, like many suns shining at once on his head, enfeebled and corrupted a noble nature. Amid the mazy dance of strange women, he was whirled away into the embrace of demon gods. The general opinion of the Church, founded upon the book of Ecclesiastes, is, that he repented and forsook his sins before death. On Solomon's fate we dare pronounce no judgment; but even granting his final happiness, it is no pleasing task to record the mistakes, the sins, the sorrows, nor even the repentance of a being originally so noble. If at 'evening time it was light with him,' yet did not a scorching splendour torment the noon, and did not thunders, melting into heavy showers, obscure the after-day? The 'glory of Solomon' is a troubled and fearful glory. On all sides, bright or black, he was equally and roundly great. Like a pyramid, the shadow he cast in one direction was as vast as the light he received on the other.

"With a bound of gladness, we pass from the dark uncertain close of Solomon's life to his works and genius. In these he exhibits himself in three aspects—a poetical proverbialist, a poetical inquirer, and a poetical lover; the first, in his Proverbs; the second, in his book of Ecclesiastes; and the third, in his Song of Songs."†

The volumes from which these closing extracts have been taken only require to be read, that they may be appreciated and admired.

* Rev. R. Buchanan, D.D., Glasgow.

† Rev. G. Gilfillan, Dundee.

EXERCISES.

Where did the Lord appear to Solomon? For what did Solomon pray? What answer did he receive? In what have we the first display of Solomon's wisdom to judge? What was the extent of the territories of his kingdom? What was his provision for one day? What was the number of his Proverbs and his Songs? Who prepared the timber and stones for building the house of the Lord? How many were employed in the work? In what manner did Solomon dedicate the temple? By whom was he led into idolatry? How long did he reign? In what year of the world did he die? How long was that before the birth of Christ? Where was he buried? What is the general opinion of the Church concerning his last end?

CHAPTER XIV.

FROM THE END OF SOLOMON'S REIGN TO THAT OF HOSHEA.

B.C. 975—721.

Reign of Rehoboam—Revolt of the Ten Tribes—Of the Kings who Reigned over Israel after they were Separated from Judah.

It has been already noticed, that, during Solomon's happy and peaceful reign, "the Hebrew commonwealth reached its highest measure of prosperity, and possessed an extent of territory beyond that of any former or subsequent period of its history. But this condition of things, which made the Jews the most powerful and flourishing nation of Western Asia, and procured for their wise and magnificent king the respect and admiration of the world, ended with his reign. The headstrong folly of his son and successor caused a disastrous change. Upon his accession to the throne, he despised the counsel of old men, and hearkened to the advice of rash young men; he threatened the nation of Israel to make their yoke heavier than his father had done, saying, 'I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people said unto the king, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel.' The empire was then rent in twain. Accordingly, as it had been predicted, ten tribes renounced their allegiance, and formed themselves into a separate kingdom under Jeroboam, leaving to Rehoboam the united tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

"Henceforth two rival kingdoms existed in the land, weaken-

ing each other by their frequent strife, and calling down upon themselves the judgments of God for their wickedness and idolatry."

"Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem. And there was war between him and Jeroboam all their days. And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And Abijam his son reigned in his stead."—1 Kings xiv. 21-31.

We shall now briefly notice the kings who reigned over Israel after they were separated from Judah. These were nineteen, and not one of them was good, or did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. Jeroboam the first, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, Joash, Jeroboam the second, Zachariah, Shallum, Manahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea.

JEROBOAM THE FIRST, being established as king over the ten tribes, and fearing that, if the people went up frequently to sacrifice at Jerusalem, they would be tempted to return again to Rehoboam king of Judah, in order to prevent this, "he made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan," and taught the people to worship before them. "And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, who were not of the sons of Levi."—1 Kings xii. 31. God manifested his displeasure against this worship, by sending a prophet to the altar at Bethel, who foretold that a son of the house of David, Josiah by name, should burn the bones of Jeroboam's priests upon the altar. After this, by Ahijah, the Lord threatened the house of Jeroboam with utter destruction, so that none of them should find a grave except Ahijah, his youngest son, "because in him there was found some good thing toward the LORD GOD of Israel. And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he reigned, behold they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. And the years which Jeroboam reigned were twenty and two: and he slept with his fathers; and

NADAB his son reigned in his stead" for two years; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin;" and

BAASHA, the son of Ahijah, slew him at Gibbethon, and reigned in his stead. "Then the word of the LORD came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying, Behold, I will

take away the posterity of Baasha. Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the field shall the fowls of the air eat. So Baasha slept with his fathers; and

ELAH his son reigned in his stead. When he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza his steward, his servant

ZIMRI, captain of half his chariots, conspired against him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, but only for the brief space of seven days.

OMRI, being captain of the host, went up and besieged Tirzah, the royal city. And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the palace, and perished in the flames. Then were the people of Israel divided: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Genath, to make him king; and half followed Omri. But the people that followed Omri prevailed: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned twelve years, and wrought evil in the sight of the LORD, and did worse than all that were before him. So he slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria; and

AHAB his son reigned in his stead. Twenty and two years reigned he over Israel in Samaria; and did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him. "Under the reign of the wicked Ahab, and his still more wicked and worthless queen, Jezebel, clouds and thick darkness cover the whole land of Israel; idolatrous temples and heathen altars occupy the sacred soil; every hill smokes with their sacrifices, every vale resounds with the blasphemous yells of their cruel priesthood. Then, and there, behold the man of God commencing his career with an unheard-of act of faith, standing in the midst of his foes before the tyrant Ahab, and, in the name of the LORD God of Israel, closing the heavens over them, and changing the firmament into iron and brass, and the dew of heaven was restrained during three years and six months."* During this famine the prophet is commanded by God to go and hide himself by the brook Cherith, and the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning and the evening; and he drank of the water of the brook.—1 Kings xvii. 5, 6. When the brook was dried up, God sent him to a widow woman at Sarepta, near Sidon, to be maintained by her, when she had only a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse. Here God wonderfully increased the oil and the meal, so that the barrel of meal

* Dr Krummacher.

wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, till God sent rain upon the land. "And it came to pass after these things, that the son of this woman fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. And Elijah took him, and laid him upon his own bed, and stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he delivered him unto his mother."

In 1 Kings xviii. 1-16, we find Elijah, at the commandment of Jehovah, leaving Sarepta, meeting first with Obadiah, the governor of Ahab's house, afterwards with Ahab, who said unto him, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Elijah, like himself, boldly returns the charge upon the despotic king, saying, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim. And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call upon the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people said, It is well spoken. And it came to pass at the time of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God." Elijah's faith is crowned, the foolish priests are put to shame, and all the gods which are not the God of the Bible are confounded and annihilated. Again, on Carmel's summit, we find this prophet *kneeling down*, closing his eyes, bending his head forwards towards his knees, and in this posture, behold him praying to

God for rain; the prayer is answered, the heaven gives rain, and the land once more brings forth her fruit.

"And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had slain all the prophets of Baal. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time." So he arose and went for his life. Sitting under a juniper tree in the wilderness, he said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And as he lay and slept here, he is visited by an angel, and fed with bread and water; and in the strength of that meat he went forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the mount of God. And there, after storm and tempest, by strong wind, fire, and earthquake, the LORD manifested himself to Elijah "in a still small voice."

After this he is sent to anoint Hazael to be king over Syria, that he might become a scourge to Israel. His second commission was to anoint Jehu, the son of Nimshi, to be king over Israel. As if God had said, I will vindicate mine own glory, "the house of Ahab shall be desolate, and Jehu shall be the axe to its root." And so it was. Ahab having coveted the vineyard of Naboth, and, by the help of false witnesses, stoned him to death for blasphemy, Elijah is sent by God to denounce his doom, and finding him in the garden of Naboth, he addresses him—"Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel." For the fulfilment of these awful denunciations, see 1 Kings xxi. 19, xxii. 38, and 2 Kings ix. 30-37. So Ahab slept with his fathers; and

AHAZIAH his son reigned in his stead over Israel, for the space of two years; and he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father and mother had done. Having fallen through a lattice in his upper chamber, and being sick, he sends messengers to consult the god of Ekron as to his recovery. Elijah is sent to meet them with a message from the God of Israel, informing him that he should not come down from the bed on which he had gone up, but should surely die. Enraged by this announcement, Ahaziah sends out a captain and fifty men to seize and bring the prophet before him; these, with a second captain and other fifty men, at the word of Elijah, are all consumed by fire from heaven. A third captain and other *fifty men being sent out for the same purpose, the captain having humbly besought Elijah that his soul and the souls of*

his men might be precious in his sight, the prophet spared him, and then went down with him to king Ahaziah, and told him that he should surely die.

The time when this great prophet is to be withdrawn from our view is now at hand. Behold Elijah and Elisha, these two men of God, passing on together in the country beyond Jordan! While engaged in holy conversation, "it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters of Jordan, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? And the waters parted hither and thither; and Elisha went over." Now Elisha, with the spirit of his great predecessor, inherits also his office and his flock. After this he wrought many miracles, for a full account of which, see the Second Book of Kings from the second to the eighth chapter. Our limits only permit us to give the following epitome of them:—He cured the unwholesome water near Jericho, by casting salt into it. He cursed some children that mocked him, and there came two she-bears out of the wood and tore forty-two of them. He brought water in a time of drought to supply the armies of Edom, Judah, and Israel. He increased the widow's pot of oil that it was sufficient to pay her debts, and maintain her. He promised a son to the Shunammite woman, who before had been barren, and, by faith and *prayer*, raised this son to life again when he died. ("See the power of *prayer*; as it has the key of the clouds, so it has the key of death.") He cleansed Naaman, the Syrian, by desiring him to wash in Jordan. He pronounced the plague of leprosy on Gehazi, his own servant, for his covetousness and falsehood. He discovered the king of Syria's private counsels to the king of Israel, and, after *praying*, smote his army with blindness. He foretold great plenty, on the morrow, in the midst of a siege and famine in Samaria. He foretold the death of Benhadad, the king of Syria, and that Hazael should succeed him, and rule over Israel with cruelty. After this Elisha sent one of the sons of the prophets to anoint

JEHU to be king over Israel, according to the appointment of God.—2 Kings ix. 2, &c. God made Jehu an instrument in his hand to destroy the worship of Baal, and to bring his threatened judgments on the house of Ahab; all which he did. He shot Jehoram, the son of Ahab, who was then king, and cast

his body upon the land of Naboth, whom Ahab slew. He commanded the wicked Jezebel to be thrown out of the window, and the dogs ate her up. He ordered the seventy remaining sons of Ahab to be slain in Samaria, and their heads to be brought to him in baskets.—2 Kings ix., x. In order to destroy the worshippers of Baal, he gathered his prophets, priests, and worshippers together into his temple, under pretence of a great sacrifice to Baal, and then commanded them all to be slain with the sword, and the image to be burnt, and the temple destroyed. Though he did all this against Ahab and the worshippers of Baal, yet he maintained the idolatry of Jeroboam. And the time that Jehu reigned over Israel was twenty and eight years. And he slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria; and

JEHOAHAZ his son reigned in his stead for the space of seventeen years, and did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; so that he delivered Israel into the hand of Hazael, king of Syria, and into the hand of Benhadad, the son of Hazael, all their days. And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and his son

JOASH reigned in his stead, for sixteen years, doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. At this time Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. "And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." The prophet, upon his deathbed, foretold him that he should smite the Syrians thrice, who had oppressed Israel in the days of his father.—2 Kings xiii. 17. Now the rest of the acts of Joash which he did, and his might, and how he fought against Amaziah, king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And his son,

JEROBOAM the second, reigned in his stead over Israel in Samaria for forty years, doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. And he slept with the kings of Israel; and

ZACHARIAH his son reigned in his stead over Israel in Samaria for the space of six months, doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; and

SHALLUM, the son of Jabesh, conspired against him, and slew him. Thus was the word of the LORD fulfilled, which he spake unto Jehu, saying, Thy sons shall sit on the throne of Israel unto the fourth generation. So it came to pass, when Shallum had reigned one month,

MENAHEN, the son of Gadi, went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum, and slew him, and reigned in his

stead for ten years, doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. And Menahem slept with his fathers; and

PEKAHIAH his son reigned in his stead; and he reigned two years, and did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.

PEKAH, a captain of his, conspired against him, and slew him, in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, and reigned in his room for the space of twenty years; and he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. He joined with the kings of Syria to invade Judah, but he was repulsed. In his days Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, took many cities in Galilee, and carried many of the people captive to Assyria.—2 Kings xv. 29, and xvi. 5-9.

HOSHEA, the son of Elah, made a conspiracy against Pekah, and slew him, and reigned in Samaria over Israel nine years. About seven hundred and twenty-four years before our Saviour, Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, came up against Samaria, in the sixth year of the reign of Hoshea, and, after a siege of three years, took the city, carried Israel away into Assyria, and distributed them into several distant countries, from which they have not yet returned.—2 Kings xvii. 23. Thus was the kingdom of Israel, which had subsisted two hundred and fifty-four years, utterly destroyed. Henceforward the distinction between the ten tribes began to be effaced, and soon they disappeared altogether from the sight and knowledge of the world.

EXERCISES.

How did Rehoboam act upon his accession to the throne? With what did he threaten the people? What was the result of his threatenings. How long did he reign? Who was the first king over the ten tribes? Was he afraid that the ten tribes might return to Rehoboam? What did he do in order to prevent this? How did God manifest his displeasure against such worship? How long did he reign? By whom was he succeeded? What was his character? By whom was he slain? What of Baasha? Of Elah? Of Zimri? Of Omri? What was the state of religion under the reign of Ahab? Who appeared as the Lord's prophet in Israel at that time? Give an outline of his wonderful deeds? How did he leave this world? What did he foretell concerning the end of Ahab and Jezebel? Who succeeded him as the Lord's prophet to Israel? Mention some of the miracles which he wrought. What did God make Jehu? How did he destroy the prophets, priests, and worshippers of Baal? What happened to Israel during the reign of Jehoahaz? What relation was Joash to Jehu? By whom was Zachariah slain? What became of Shallum? What was the end of Pekahiah? Of Pekah? Who came up against Israel in the reign of Hoshea? What were the consequences? How long had the kingdom of Israel subsisted? How long was this before the birth of Christ?

CHAPTER XV.

FROM THE REIGN OF ABIJAM TO THE CAPTIVITY IN THE REIGN
OF ZEDEKIAH, B.C. 957—588.

The Kings of Judah—Rehoboam—Abijam—Asa—Jehoshaphat—Jehoram—Ahaziah—Queen Athaliah—Joash—Amaziah—Uzziah—Jotham—Ahaz—Hezekiah—Manasseh—Amon—Josiah—Jehoahaz—Jehoiakim—Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah.

Of these a few were very good, some very bad, and others of a mixed character. Having in the beginning of the preceding chapter briefly noticed the reign of Rehoboam, we now proceed to that of

ABIJAM his son, who, when Jeroboam led Israel to war against him, he reprov'd them for their departure from the true worship of God, and from the house of David, saying, "Ought ye not to know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by covenant;" and when they would not hearken, but set upon him in battle, he and his army cried unto the Lord, and shouted, and slew five hundred thousand men. A brave example of divine success.—2 Chron. xiii. 4, 17. "And the rest of the acts of Abijam, and his ways, and his sayings, are written in the story of the prophet Iddo." He was buried in the city of David; and

ASA his son reigned in his stead. "And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God: for he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves; and commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment." When Zerah, with an army of a thousand thousand Ethiopians, came against Asa, he "cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that hath no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee; and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD that art our God; let no man prevail against thee." In answer to this fervent prayer in faith, the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, so that they could not recover themselves, for they were destroyed before the LORD, and his host.

Asa, in his old age, fell into distrust of God, and gave the treasure that remained in the house of God, and in the king's house, to the king of Syria, to guard and help him against Baasha, king of Israel: he imprisoned Hanani the prophet of the

LORD for reproving him for so acting. In the thirty and ninth year of his reign he was sore diseased in his feet, "yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians. And he slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own sepulchre, which he had made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours. And they made a very great burning for him."

JEHOSHAPHAT, the son of Asa, reigned in his room, and walked in the best ways of his father David; therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand. He appointed Levites and priests throughout all the cities of Judah, to teach the law of the LORD: and he set judges in the land, with a solemn charge to do justice without bribery.—2 Chron. xvii. 7, 9, and xix. 5, 11. "And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat." After this he offended God, by joining in alliance with Ahab king of Israel, whereby he was in great danger of being slain in battle against the Assyrians.—2 Chron. xviii. 31, and xix. 2.

When the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, joined forces against Jehoshaphat, he proclaimed a fast, and prayed earnestly to the LORD, and said, "O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? And now, behold, the children of Moab, Ammon, and mount Seir, are come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit. O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee." To this prayer the Lord gave a gracious answer by a Levite, who stood in the midst of the congregation, and said, "Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's. Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem." And their enemies fell upon one another till they were all slain. This is another example of the power of PRAYER. "The strongest army that ever marched to music, fights against fearful odds, when marshalled against those who can justly say, 'The battle is the LORD's!'" Now Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers; and

JEHORAM his son reigned in his stead. And he wrought that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. He took Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, to wife, and slew all his own brethren; wherefore the LORD smote the people, his wives, and his family, with a great plague, and himself with an incurable disease in

his bowels, of which he died.—2 Chron. xxi. 18. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made

AHAZIAH, his youngest son, king in his stead : for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. He reigned one year in Jerusalem, and walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, his mother Athaliah being his counsellor to do wickedly. When he went out with Jehoram, the king of Israel, against Jehu, he was slain by Jehu.—2 Chron. xxii. 9.

ATHALIAH, his mother, seeing that her son Ahaziah was dead, seized the kingdom, destroyed all the seed-royal of the house of Judah, except Joash, the son of Ahaziah, an infant of a year old, who was hid in the temple six years. As Athaliah, the queen, had counselled her son Ahaziah to do wickedly, she herself also practised the idolatry of the house of her father Ahab.—2 Chron. xxiv. 7. Then Jehoiada, the high-priest, stirred up the captains of the army, the Levites, and the chief of the people, against her. He set

JOASH on the throne when only seven years old, anointed and proclaimed him king, and gave orders to the guards to slay Athaliah, and destroyed the worship of Baal. And Joash did that which was right all the days of Jehoiada the priest ; but after his death he changed the worship of God for idols, and most wickedly slew Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, because he reproved the idolatry of the people. For this murder, and other crimes, God sent an army of Syrians against him, who pillaged the country. God smote him with sore diseases, and his own servants conspired against him, and slew him on his bed ; and

AMAZIAH his son reigned in his stead. He did that which was right, but not with a perfect heart. Having gained a victory over the Edomites, and being proud of his success, he challenged the king of Israel to battle, by whom he was shamefully discomfited, at Bethshemesh.

Amaziah having set up the gods of the Edomites, he bowed himself down before them, and burnt incense unto them ; after which his own people made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and when he fled to Lachish they sent after him, and slew him there.—2 Chron. xxv. 27. Then all the people of Judah took

UZZIAH, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in room of his father Amaziah. He sought after God in the days of Zechariah the prophet ; and, as long as he sought the Lord, God made him prosper against all his enemies, and made his name great.—2 Chron. xxvi. 15.

Note.—This was several hundred years before that Zechariah who prophesied after the captivity. But it came to pass, when Uzziah was in his prosperity, "his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, valiant men: And they withstood the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the LORD God." While he was wroth with the priests, and had a censor in his hand to burn incense, the leprosy rose up in his forehead, and he was a leper unto the day of his death. So Uzziah slept with his fathers; and his son

JOTHAM reigned in his stead, being twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he became mighty, doing that which was right in the sight of the LORD. And he slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David; and

AHAZ his son reigned in his stead; but he did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD. He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, made images for Baal, offered his children in sacrifice by fire, gathered together the vessels of the house of God, cut them to pieces, shut up the doors of the house of God: in every corner of Jerusalem, in every city of Judah, he made high places to burn incense unto other gods. Wherefore the LORD delivered him into the hand of his enemies, the kings of Syria and Israel, and by these, and invasions of the Philistines and Edomites, the kingdom of Judah was brought almost to destruction. After a reign of sixteen years he died; but they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel; and

HEZEKIAH his son reigned in his stead. And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD. He made great reformation, not only in Judah, but also in Ephraim and Manasseh: he brake the images, cut down the groves, repaired the temple, and set up the worship of the true God. At his request, many out of several tribes came to Jerusalem to keep the passover; so that there was not the like since the days of Solomon. The LORD manifested his acceptance of Hezekiah's zeal in religion and reformation, by prospering him in his wars whithersoever he went against his enemies, and enabled him to cast off the yoke of the king of Assyria.—2 Kings xviii. 7, 8.

After this, when Sennacherib, king of Assyria, had invaded

Judah, Hezekiah was guilty of a weakness, in bribing him to depart with gold and silver taken from the temple: this had very bad consequences. A few years after, Sennacherib sent an army to take Jerusalem, with blasphemies against God, and threatenings against the people; whereupon Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, "O LORD God of Israel, who dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, who hath sent to reproach the living God. . . . Now, therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only." In answer to this prayer, Isaiah the prophet is sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard. And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand."—2 Kings xviii. and xix.

"In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the LORD said unto him by Isaiah, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. And he prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And the LORD said, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: and I will add unto thy days fifteen years." To confirm his faith in this promise, the LORD made the shadow go backwards ten degrees upon the dial of Ahaz. After that Hezekiah had received all this kindness and mercy from the LORD, in the vanity and pride of his heart, he shewed the messengers of the king of Babylon all his treasures; for the doing of which, the LORD told him by the prophet Isaiah, that all these treasures should be carried into Babylon; but because Hezekiah humbled himself, God deferred the execution of it till after his death.—2 Chron. xxxii. 26. Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah are written in the vision of Isaiah, and in the book of the kings of Judah. And he slept with his fathers; and all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, did him honour at his death; and

MANASSEH his son reigned in his stead. Twelve years old was he when he began to reign; and he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. He brought in idolatry of many kinds: he worshipped the sun, moon, and stars; he made his son pass through the fire; he used enchantments, and shed much innocent blood. Wherefore the LORD brought upon him the captains of the hosts of the kings of Assyria, who took

Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before God in *prayer*, whereupon God restored him to his kingdom, where he wrought great reformation.—2 Chron. xxxiii. 16. So Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house; and

AMON his son reigned in his stead. He restored the idolatry which his father had set up, but did not, like him, repent of his sins. His servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.—2 Chron. xxxiii. 24. And the people of the land made

JOSIAH his son king in his room. Eight years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years. When sixteen years old he sought after God, and, at twenty, he destroyed the altar and idols which his father had set up.—2 Chron. xxxiv. 7. He repaired the temple, and restored the worship of God; and having found a book of the law of the LORD by Moses, he caused it to be read in the hearing of all the people, the priests, and the prophets, and made a covenant with the people of Judah to perform what was written in this book.—2 Kings xxiii. 3.

By this time the kingdom of Israel had been destroyed by the king of Assyria; hence Josiah spread his influence over those who remained in the land, and many of Israel, as well as of Judah, came to keep the passover in exact conformity to all the rules given by Moses, so that no such passover had been kept since the days of Samuel the prophet.—2 Chron. xxxv. 18. After all this "Josiah went out to fight against Necho, king of Egypt, without the direction of God, and being sore wounded, he was brought in a chariot to Jerusalem, where he died; and great lamentation was made for him."—2 Chron. xxxv. 25. Then the people of the land took

JEHOAHAZ, the son of Josiah, and made him king. Twenty and three years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem, when he was put in bonds by the king of Egypt, was carried thither, and there he died.—2 Kings xxiii. 31. And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to

JEHOIAKIM.—Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem; and did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. Several neighbouring nations beset him round about, and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, sent his forces against him, took some

captives, and bound the king in fetters. He died in shame, and was denied a burial. His young son

JEHOIACHIN, who was also called Jeconiah, or Coniah, was made king in room of his father. He reigned only three months and ten days, doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. In those days came Nebuchadnezzar and took the city of Jerusalem, and carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, together with the king, and ten thousand captives; these he took into Babylon—Jer. xxii. 24-30,—and made

ZEDEKIAH, his father's brother, king over Judah and Jerusalem. Twenty and one years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem, doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. He rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, to whom he had sworn subjection by the name of the true God; whereupon Nebuchadnezzar came up and took the city of Jerusalem, after a siege of eighteen months, slew the sons of Zedekiah before his face, put out his own eyes, bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon. He burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, brake down the walls of the city, carried away the people captive, with all the vessels of gold, silver, and brass, that belonged to the temple.—2 Kings xxv. 1-17.

As for the people that remained in the land of Judah, even over them Nebuchadnezzar made Gedaliah ruler, who, in a short time, was slain by a faction under Ishmael, one of the seed-royal. After this one Johanan, a captain under Gedaliah, routed Ishmael, and drove him out of the land; yet, being afraid of the anger of the king of Babylon, and his resentment of the murder of Gedaliah, his governor, he fled into Egypt, and carried with him most of the people that were then in the land, when, and where, they were dispersed into several cities.—Jer. xli. 13-18, and xlii. xliii. This was done directly against the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, whom they also carried with them into Egypt, where they practised idolatry in opposition to his reproofs. There Jeremiah was ordered by the LORD to foretell the destruction of Egypt by the king of Babylon, and to denounce fearful calamities, and death, by sword and famine, upon the Jews, who sojourned there; yet, at the same time, he foretold the return of their brethren from their captivity in Babylon.—Jer. xliii. 9, xliv. 28, &c. Thus we have seen, "the time had arrived in the counsels of the Almighty for the remainder of his once favoured people to pay the penalty of their repeated and long-continued transgressions. Palestine was now, indeed, a widowed and a mourning land.

Utterly depopulated, except as tribes of wandering Arabs passed through it, its beautiful hills and fertile valleys untilled, its vines and fig-trees dropping their ungathered fruits, its deserted habitations and ruined monuments a lair for wild beasts, it became one scene of desolation—an awful manifestation of the consequences of man's wickedness, and of the severity of God's judgments." *

Having, in this and the preceding chapter, given a brief account of the reign of no fewer than nineteen of the kings of Israel, and twenty of the kings of Judah, it may not be unprofitable to reflect for a little upon the variety and influence of the conduct of these kings upon the prosperity and happiness of the country and people over whom they reigned. Would it be too much to say, that in every country, and in every age of the world, the irreligious and voluptuous example of the rulers has had a malign and withering influence upon the mental, moral, civil, and religious habits of the governed? It has been well said, that reformation must begin at home. Ill practices will never be suppressed in any country while they are supported in the court. We ought to be very grateful to "Him by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice," for His having given us one of the best queens that ever sat upon a throne; being truly exemplary in the discharge of all her relative duties as a woman, a sovereign, a wife, a mother, and a Christian!

It may not be out of place to state here, that the books of the Old Testament are not placed in the order of time in which they were written, but rather according to their size than their seniority—the longest first, not the eldest. It will be profitable for the scholar, or student of Scripture, when reading the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah, at the same time carefully to consult the Chronological Table in regard of the dates of the prophecies; there, for example, we find that Isaiah, who wrote so much of Christ, that he has justly been styled the Evangelical Prophet, prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Jeremiah began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, king of Judah, and continued until the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, being forty years. We shall conclude this chapter with a brief biographical sketch of the weeping prophet:—

"The prophet wept for Israel; wished his eyes
Were fountains fed with infinite supplies;
Wept till all Israel heard his bitter cry,
Stamped with his foot, and smote upon his thigh:

* Rev. J. M. Wainwright, D.D.

But wept, and stamped, and smote his thigh in vain.
 Pleasure is deaf when told of future pain,
 And sounds prophetic are too rough to suit
 Ears long accustomed to the pleasing lute :
 They scorned his inspiration and his theme,
 Pronounced him frantic, and his fears a dream ;
 With self-indulgence winged the fleeting hours,
 Till the foe found them, and down fell the towers."*

In this servant of the LORD, there is a wonderful combination of character. In him is to be found all the sanctity of the prophet, the heroism of the patriot, and the pathos of the poet; yet we find him with the humility and docility of a child, saying, "Ah, LORD God! behold, I cannot speak." To dispel his fears, and to inspire him with confidence, the LORD put forth his hand, and touched his mouth, and said unto him, "Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, to build, and to plant. . . . Therefore, gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. They shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee."

Jeremiah being thus commissioned and encouraged by God to carry His messages, and to pronounce His judgments against the people, princes, and kings of Judah, he proceeded to the discharge of his arduous duty, which he executed faithfully and fearlessly, by direct and earnest appeals, by parables, and by emblems; all this he did at the risk of his life, and under the malignant persecution of priests and false prophets, for which see the whole of his writings. "Mingled with his ardour of spirit and earnestness of appeal, there are touches of poetic grandeur. It is a true martial fire which inspirits his descriptions of carnage and desolation. In his own language, he is a 'lion from the swellings of Jordan, coming up against the habitations of the strong.' There is a fury in his eye which makes you wonder if aught else were ever there: it is mildness maddened into a holy and fearful frenzy.

In his Lamentations, his is that figure of Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted, because they are not. His the plaintive question, 'Is there no balm in Gilead?' And his the wide wish of sorrow, 'O that my head were waters,

* Cowper.

and mine eyes a *fountain* of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!' And was not this wide wish granted, when, in the Lamentations, he poured out his heart in those deep melodies of desolation, mourning, and woe?—to use the beautiful language of that great and holy man departed.*

"The scene is Jerusalem lying in heaps; the poet, the holy child of inspiration, appears upon the ruins, and, with notes of desolation and woe, strikes his harp to the fallen fortunes of his country. It was not that the pleasant land now lay waste; it was not that the daughters of Jerusalem were slain, and her streets ran red—and they did run red;—but it was the temple—the temple of the LORD,—with its altars, its sanctuary, its holy of holies levelled to the ground—rubbish where beauty stood, ruin where strength was: its glory fled, its music ceased, its solemn assemblies no more, and its priesthood immolated, or carried far away. These had shed their glory over Israel and over all the land, and it was the destruction of these which gave its tone of woe to the heart of the 'Israelite indeed.' Over this scene Jeremiah broods with the tenderest and softest feelings, identifies himself with his country, feels Jerusalem's sword in his own heart, and lingers in fond admiration of its happier times, when the 'sons of Zion were comparable to fine gold, and her Nazarites were purer than snow.' Before closing this sketch of the sweet, sad singer of Israel, let us notice the personal interest he acquires from the minute details we have of his history. We find him smitten, put in the stocks, in the prison, in the dungeon, under bonds and yokes. Alas! 'my brother,' is our exclamation, as we witness his woes. A brother's voice, now tremulous in grief, now urgent in entreaty, now loud in anger, and now swelling into lofty poetry, sounds down upon us through the solemn centuries of the past, and we grieve that the grave denies us the blessing of a brother's presence, and the pressure of a brother's hand."†

EXERCISES.

How many kings reigned over Judah? What is said of their character in general? What was remarkable in the reign of Abijam? In that of Asa? Of what disease did he die? How did Jehoshaphat reign? In what did he give offence to God? How did he overcome the Moabites and Ammonites? Did Jehoram his son walk in the ways of his father? How did God manifest his displeasure against Jehoram? By whom was he succeeded in the kingdom? How did Ahaziah govern, and what was his end? Who next seized the kingdom? How

* The Rev. Mr Jameson of Methven. † "Bards of the Bible."

did she act? What was her end? How did Joash begin his reign? How did he finish it? By whom was he slain? How did Amaziah begin his reign? By whom was he slain? Where? By whom was he succeeded? For what sin was he severely punished? In what state was the kingdom of Judah in the reign of Ahaz? How long did he reign? Mention some of the good deeds of Hezekiah? How did the Lord manifest his acceptance of these? How did Hezekiah act when Sennacherib sent an army to take Jerusalem? What was the result? What of his sickness? Into what sin did he fall after his recovery? What was the character of his son Manasseh? What of his repentance and reformation? What of the reign of his son Amon? What reformations did Josiah make in his reign? How did he act when the book of the law was found? What was his end? Was he much lamented? How long did his son reign? Whom did the king of Egypt place in his stead? What was his character? Who came against Jerusalem in the reign of Jehoiachin? Who was the last king in Judah? What became of him? What became of the people who remained in the land? When did Josiah prophesy? And Jeremiah? What was his character?

CHAPTER XVI.

FROM THE CARRYING AWAY, IN THE REIGN OF JEHOIACHIN, TILL
THE RESTORATION, B.C. 599—536.

Daniel—His Prophecies and Character.

Next to the life of Jeremiah, and to what has already been stated concerning the carrying away of the Jews into Babylon, we would place the life of Daniel, who was one of the captives, and of the tribe of Judah. Ezekiel, who was his contemporary, but much his senior, speaks of him as an oracle, when thus he upbraids the king of Tyre with self-conceit:—"Thou art wiser than Daniel."—Ezek. xxviii. 3. He is likewise there celebrated for success in prayer, when Noah, Daniel, and Job, are reckoned as three men who had the greatest interest in heaven of any other.—Ezek. xiv. 14. The book bearing his name naturally divides itself into two divisions. From the beginning of the first chapter to the close of the sixth, it is chiefly historical, and contains an account of a variety of most wonderful events which happened to himself, to some of his fellow-captives, to Nebuchadnezzar, and to his grandson, king Belshazzar. "The second division of the book is strictly prophetic, and comprises the visions and prophecies with which Daniel was favoured in the land of his captivity, relating to the four great monarchies of the world, to

the advent and work of Messiah, to the reign and rise of Antichrist, and to the extension, prosperity, and glory of the Church to the latest ages of her existence in the world."* Of Daniel it has been well said, that he "was certainly one of the most admirable of Scripture worthies. His character was formed in youth; it was retained in defiance of the seductions and of the terrors of a court. His genius, furnished with every advantage of education, and every variety of Pagan learning, was consecrated to God. The window of his prophecy, like that of his chamber, stood open toward Jerusalem." Of him and three of his companions it is written,—“As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.” Thus he was the second prince of dreamers, Joseph being the first. “His pillow was at times a throne—the throne of his genius, the throne of empires, and of all future ages. All dreams must yield in magnitude, grandeur, and comprehensiveness, to the dreams which Daniel expounded or saw. Empires, religions, the history of time, the opening gateways of eternity, are all spanned by these dreams. They are recounted in language grave, solemn, and serene. A calm uniform dignity distinguish all his actions and words. It forsakes not his brow, even while he is astonished for an hour in the presence of the monarch. It enters with him as he enters, awful in holiness, into the hall of Belshazzar’s feast. It sits over him in the lions’ den like a canopy of state, and it sustains his style to its usual even exalted pitch in describing the session of the ANCIENT OF DAYS, and the fiery stream that goes forth before Him.”†

We have thus given a very summary view of what is contained in the book of Daniel. In looking over which, we find that its author was a young man when, in the first captivity, in the reign of Jehoiachin, he was taken a captive to Babylon, where, under Divine inspiration and protection, in the courts and councils of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Cyrus, and Darius, he lived a long and active life, as a statesman, a courtier, and a man of business. By his temperance, his piety, his unflinching firmness of principle, his patriotism, his discretion and prudence, he gained, and retained to an advanced old age, the most distinguished honours, and the highest offices of trust, which either the Babylonian or Persian monarchs could bestow. And what was of far more value, and infinitely of greater importance, Gabriel, the strong one of God, was despatched from the court of heaven, and charged to quicken his flight, and certify to

* Rev. W. Ramsay’s Exposition.

† The Rev. G. Gilfillan.

Daniel that he was "a man greatly beloved" of the "King of kings and Lord of lords;" that the pleadings and intercessions he was then making in behalf of his countrymen in captivity were heard in heaven, and were just about to be answered, in their liberation from Babylon's bondage. Nay, more, the angel is commissioned to make Daniel understand, that "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." "*Thy people, and thy holy city,*" were the Jews and Jerusalem; and the "*Seventy weeks*" mentioned, must be understood in the common prophetic style, a day for a year—that is, seventy weeks of seven days each, make 490 prophetic days, or 490 literal years. Hence it has been found, according to the most accurate calculations, it was just about four hundred and ninety years from the end of the Babylonish captivity to the time when "Messiah was cut off, but not for himself."

EXERCISES.

Of what tribe was Daniel? For what was he celebrated by Ezekiel? Into how many divisions does the book of Daniel naturally divide itself? Whether is the first six chapters historical or prophetical? What does the second division of the book comprise? When was Daniel's character formed? What did God give unto him and three of his companions? Name another Scripture character that very much resembled Daniel. Were the dreams and visions which Daniel saw and expounded, greater and grander than all others? In what style are they recounted to us? Did Daniel occupy the highest offices of trust as a statesman in the courts of the Babylonian and Persian monarchs? What was of greater importance to him than all this? How was he employed at the time, when the angel came from heaven to tell him "that seventy weeks were determined upon his people and upon the holy city?" How are these weeks to be understood?

CHAPTER XVII.

OF THE RETURN OF THE JEWS FROM CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON, AND
THEIR REBUILDING THE CITY AND TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM,
B.C. 536—445.

Darius—Cyrus—Zerubbabel—Ezra—Nehemiah.

Towards the close of Daniel's life we find, that although he

was richly endowed with the spirit of prophecy, and "a man greatly beloved of God," yet he did not deem it below his notice diligently to study the writings of those who had gone before him. Hence we find it recorded, Dan. ix. 1, 2, "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; in the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem." The prediction referred to is to be found in several parts of the prophecies of Jeremiah, but more particularly in chaps. xxv. 12, and xxix. 10, 14.

Concerning the date when this took place Daniel is very particular. It was in the first year of the reign of Darius the Median, by whom the kingdom of Babylon was taken, in that night in which the voluptuous and impious Belshazzar was slain. He was the same Darius who had caused Daniel to be cast into the den of lions; but upon his learning that the living God, whom Daniel faithfully served, had sent His angel, and shut the lions' mouths, so that they had done him no harm, then king Darius wrote a decree unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth, "That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

As Daniel was prime minister, and held in high estimation at court, it is supposed by some that he wisely used his influence in behalf of his countrymen, in seasonably bringing before the notice of the Persian monarch the prophecies of Isaiah, so pointedly relating to himself, pronounced more than one hundred years before he was born, where it is written,—Isa. xlv. 28—"That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid."—"Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that

thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts."—Isa. xlv. 1-3, 13.

The seventy years of captivity had now come to an end, and we are not left to conjecture what was the reason, or what was the cause, by which Cyrus felt himself convinced that he must now take an active part in being instrumental in fulfilling the counsels of the Almighty in the restoration of His people. In the Scriptures we have no fewer than two copies of the memorable and important edict which he wrote, and caused to be proclaimed throughout all his kingdom. The reason why he did it—"That the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished." The cause why he did it—"The LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia." Hence the decree went forth—"Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides the freewill offering for the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem."—2 Chron. xxxvi. 23; Ezra i. 1-4. Here let it be observed, that as there were several seasons, and under different kings, when part of the children of Israel and Judah were carried into captivity, and several periods whence their desolations may commence, so there were several seasons also of their return and restoration; but the chief duration of their captivity and desolate circumstances was seventy years, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah—2 Chron. xxxvi. 21; Jer. xxv. 11, 12; compared with Ezra i. 1, 2, vi. 1-12, vii. 7; Neh. ii. 1, &c.

This proclamation gave great joy to the Jews. "Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered.

Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house

of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods." The number of these vessels we have in Ezra i. 9-11. They were given in charge by Cyrus to Zerubbabel, grandson of king Jehoiachin, and prince of the Jews; he was their leader, and Jeshua was high-priest. Cyrus appointed Zerubbabel governor of Judea. He was called Sheshbazzar by the Persians. In the second chapter of Ezra we have a catalogue of the several families that returned. "The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore, beside their servants and their maids, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and there were among them two hundred singing men and singing women." By giving according to their ability, these Jews made a large contribution toward the rebuilding of the temple; they gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem, set up the altar of the God of Israel, and offered sacrifices upon it.—Ezra iii. 1-6. "And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Israel." While the younger part of the assembly shouted for joy, many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, wept with a loud voice, when they remembered how much more glorious the first temple was than the second was like to be.—Hag. ii. 3.

"A company of poor exiles, returning from a long captivity, could not promise or hope for so glorious a building as the temple of Solomon, neither in the richness of the materials, nor in the magnificence and curiosity of the workmanship."—See Dr Prideaux's *Connection*, Vol. i. p. 143. The Jews also generally suppose five things to be wanting in the second temple after it was finished, which did belong to the first; namely, (1.) The ark of the covenant, and the mercy-seat, which was upon it, with the cherubs of gold, together with the tables of stone on which the law was written which were in the ark when it was brought into Solomon's temple.—1 Kings viii. 9. (2.) The Shechinah, or Divine presence, in a cloud of glory on the mercy-seat. (3.) The *Urim* and *Thummim*, whence the oracle came, or divine answers to their inquiries. (4.) The holy fire upon the altar, which came from heaven. (5.) The spirit of prophecy. For though Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, lived while the second temple was building, and prophesied after it was built, yet on their death the prophetic spirit ceased until the days of John the Baptist.

Thus we have seen, that, under the superintendency of Zerubbabel as governor, and Jeshua as high-priest, the foundation of the temple was laid, and the rebuilding of the holy city commenced. Here we must not forget what was told to Daniel by the angel. "The street shall be built again, and the wall, *even in troublous times.*" And they were times of trouble! A long period had to elapse, many trials and obstacles had to be encountered and overcome before the work was completed. These trials and obstacles arose chiefly from the Samaritans, who set themselves to obstruct the building of the temple, "and hired counsellors against the people of Judah, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia."—Ezra iv. 1-5. When Artaxerxes the first came to the throne of Persia, these people wrote an accusation against the Jews, that the city of Jerusalem had been rebellious in former times; whereupon Artaxerxes caused the work to cease till the second year of Darius Hystaspes, as the best authors assert.—Ezra iv. 24.

At this time the enemies of the Jews had appealed to Darius, hoping to get an order to suppress them, but instead of that, got an order to supply them. The original and long-forgotten decree of Cyrus was now searched for, and found among the records of Babylon.—Ezra v. 3-17. This decree of Cyrus being now produced, in which every assistance had been ordered to be given for the restoration of Jerusalem, Darius now gives a fresh command for the rebuilding of the house of God, saying, "I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed. Then the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king." Then the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, dedicated it with many sacrifices, and they kept the feast of the passover with joy; for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.—Ezra vi. 15-22.

Now after these things, Artaxerxes the second, king of Persia, gave Ezra, the priest and scribe, a letter and decree, to encourage the Jews yet remaining in Babylon to go up to Jerusalem and establish the worship of the true God: and being sensible of the greatness and power of the God of the Jews,

whom he calls the "God of heaven," he seeks to procure his favour for himself and his family; hence he and his counsellors freely offered much silver and gold, giving the whole charge to Ezra, saying unto him, "After the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not. And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment."—Ezra vii. 11, 25, 26.

In the eighth chapter of Ezra, we have a particular narrative of Ezra's journey to Jerusalem, and of those that left Babylon and went with him. Then he says, "I proclaimed a fast at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was entreated of us." "In all our concerns about ourselves, our families, and our estates, it is our wisdom and duty, by prayer, to commit to God, and leave the care of them with him." Ezra and the party that went with him having safely arrived at Jerusalem, he delivered the king's commissions to the king's lieutenants, and to the governors of the provinces, and the gold and the silver to those who had the care of the building, and so promoted the work.—Ezra viii. 33–36.

Here let it be observed in general, that it is not a very easy matter for learned men to agree exactly in adjusting the time of all these events, and the particular accomplishment of every prophecy, because there were several kings of the same name, as three or four Artaxerxes, and three or more Dariuses, &c. And there were four decrees from the kings of Persia in favour of the Jews; the first of these from Cyrus to Zerubbabel, or Shesbazzar, a prince of Judah—Ezra i. 1–8; the second, from Darius the second, to the enemies of the Jews, to forbid their hindrance of the work—Ezra vi. 1–7; the third, from Artaxerxes the second, to Ezra, recorded in Ezra vii. 11; the fourth, from the same Artaxerxes to Nehemiah, written in Neh. ii. 1–9.

This second Artaxerxes is supposed, by Dr Prideaux, to be Artaxerxes Longimanus, as the heathen historian calls him; and to be that same Ahasuerus who made Esther his queen, and so

became very friendly to the Jews. Nehemiah being his cup-bearer, and having learned, by some of his brethren, that they were still in great affliction and reproach, that the walls of Jerusalem were broken down, and that the gates thereof were burnt with fire, he then fasted and prayed to the God of heaven, and obtained leave of Artaxerxes, the king, to go up to Jerusalem, and rebuild the city of the sepulchres of his fathers. He also received letters from the king to the governors of the provinces to assist him, and to give him wood out of the king's forest.—Neh. ii. 1-8. Having come to Jerusalem, he arose in the night, rode round the city, took a private survey of its ruins, and appointed certain portions of the wall and the gates to be repaired by particular persons and their companies.—Neh. ii. and iii.

But it came to pass, that, when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite, with the Arabians and Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then were they very wroth, and mocked the Jews, saying, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall. And they all conspired together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder the work. Nevertheless, Nehemiah and his followers having made their prayer to the God of heaven for help and direction, they set a watch against their enemies by day and night; and every man that laboured in the work had a weapon ready to defend himself.—Neh. iv. 13-23.

In the fifth chapter of Nehemiah, we find that he set himself to redress the grievances of the poor: he reproved those who, by taking usury, had oppressed their brethren. Though he was governor for the space of twelve years, (*unlike those in our day*) he exacted no salary, but maintained himself and one hundred and fifty Jews at his own expense.—Neh. v. 7-19. So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days. And on the first day of the seventh month all the people were gathered together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; then Ezra, the priest and scribe, read in the book of the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading, that they might see their past sins, and might be instructed to yield a more regular and exact obedience for the future; this being done, he blessed the great God, and all the people answered, Amen, Amen.—Neh. viii. 1-8. After this they kept the feast of tabernacles, by dwelling in booths made of branches of trees seven days together, as God had commanded by Moses, and they read in the book of the law every day of the seven, and ex-

joined it.—Neh. vii. 14-15. Now in the twenty and fourth day of the seventh month, the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and they separated themselves from all strangers, and one-fourth part of the day they confessed their sins, and another fourth part they read in the book of the law, and they entered into a covenant, with an oath, to be the Lord's people, and the princes, and the priests, and the Levites sealed the covenant.—Neh. ix. x. 1, 2.

At this time the rulers of the people dwell at Jerusalem: the rest of the people cast lots to bring one of ten to dwell at Jerusalem, and nine parts to dwell in other cities, that the land might be repopulated.—Neh. xi. And at the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps. Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced: for God had made them rejoice with great joy: the wives also and the children rejoiced: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.—Neh. xii. 27-43. After this Nehemiah did much to reform the people among whom he dwelt. He turned Tobiah, the Ammonite, out of his lodging in the temple, which Eliashib, the high-priest, had prepared for him: he established the portion of the fruits of the earth which belonged to the Levites: he forbade the profanation of the Sabbath by buying and selling, and bearing burdens: and punished the Jews who had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab.—Neh. xiii. 4-23.

Thus far we have endeavoured to give a connected scriptural history of the transactions of God with men, and more particularly with His own people, the children of Israel, in a long continued succession of wonderful events, from the creation of the world to the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, and the settling of the church and state under Nehemiah, whom the king of Persia had made governor over the land.

We shall conclude this chapter with a very brief biographical sketch of the lives of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Scripture informs us, "this Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him. For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." He was a man of great learning, very much conversant with the Scriptures, especially the writings of Moses, had the words ready, and was well

acquainted with the sense and meaning of them. The Jews say, he collected and collated all the copies of the law he could find out, and published an accurate edition of it, with all the prophetic books, historical and poetical, that were given by Divine inspiration, and so made up the canon of the Old Testament, with the additions of the prophecies and histories of his own times, which, if he was raised up of God, and spirited to do, all generations have reason to call him blessed, and to bless God for him. It is a remark of Dr Prideaux, "that though Ezra's authority and government expired during the time that Nehemiah was governor, yet he went on, as a skilful scribe of the law of God, to preach righteousness, to perfect the reformation, to gather the several parts of Scripture together, to set forth correct copies of them, and to bring all things in church and state to the rules thereof: and this he did by the assistance of Nehemiah, doing the same things by his authority which before he did by his own."

That Ezra was a man of grateful heart, humility, and deep-toned piety, see his thanksgiving, Ezra vii. 27, and humility and confession of sin, Ezra ix. 5-15. In his public character, our limits forbid us to go any farther. Let us now look a little at NEHEMIAH.

To the man of God, deeply interested in His cause, the study of Nehemiah, as a public character, will afford much instruction, which we cannot now detail. Nehemiah is very gentle; he possesses a mildness and diffidence of character, you would even think, approaching to timidity. But the public cause rouses Nehemiah to a courage, a boldness, and independence, quite above the gentleness of his own disposition. In the royal presence, and before the awful majesty of the Persian monarch, he is ready to sink down; yet he tells him of his Jerusalem, and boldly avows his attachment to her rubbish and her stones. Nehemiah has been brought up in the soft luxuriance of an eastern court; yet, in the cause of God, and his beloved Zion, he takes the command of a most perilous expedition to Jerusalem, where, at length, he arrives, to see with his own eyes the truth of all that had been told him concerning its desolations. At midnight, when his companions are enjoying repose from the fatigues of the expedition, Nehemiah, in sleepless anxiety, is surveying the ruins of the city, and resolving on the measures which must be adopted to raise Jerusalem from her rubbish—a work more arduous, perhaps, than her first erection, and yet a work to which Nehemiah's whole force was but a handful. Public spirit, however, as it rises on the greater emergency of the cause, is not to be cast down. How he labours

How he apportions out the work ! How he entreats ! How he supports, and how he encourages ! The good cause, as in every instance, had to encounter most inveterate and crafty opposition. With what noble dignity he scorns the threats of the adversaries ! With what presence of mind he penetrates their designs, escapes their snares, and skilfully defeats their projects !

They thought, that as a fox's tread would break down Nehemiah's wall, so the blast of their nostrils would crush his spirit. They are miserably disappointed. Nehemiah presents to them the front of battle ; and the man who had never, or scarcely known war, held his sword in one hand, and fearlessly built with the other. The work went on. Never before had a greater work been undertaken with smaller means, and never were mightier efforts crowned with higher success.

Nehemiah's first object is, to build the wall of the city of his God, and to rear a bulwark, at once to separate most effectually, and to defend the Church from her enemies. In fifty and two days it is done. His second object is, having completed her wall of defence, to establish within her the ordinances of Zion, in the number, and purity, and life of their dispensation. This also is accomplished. His third object is, to institute a scrutiny amongst the multitude in Jerusalem, and faithfully to separate between those who were Israelites and those who were not. His fourth object is, having formed his Israel, compacted by that which every joint supplieth, to bind the whole together in close, harmonious, and solemn union to one another, and to the common cause. His last object, which closes the mighty enterprise, is, to lead the whole body, thus re-established, into the beauty of holiness. It is done also ; for, as Nehemiah trembles even at the usury which had made its appearance in the city, the people shake it off : as he gives them a charge to sanctify the Sabbath, the people obey.

In Nehemiah we find exemplified the association of the public cause with every feeling, and with all that conduct, which are most generous, and opposite to the narrow and selfish partialities of our nature. We admire in him, the disinterestedness of the governor, the hospitality of his house, the bounty of his table. In him we find exemplified, the association of high interest in the cause of God, with that consciousness of rectitude and benevolent design, which opens the heart to the most unhampered frankness, places it above fear, inspires it with that high dignity which looks the foe in the face, and dictates the lofty sentiment, "Should such a man as I flee?"

The example of Nehemiah's public character is particularly suited to us, in the present dispensation of grace. Nehemiah

put in motion only those common means which were ordained by God, in the ordinary state of His Church, and which were similar in their appointment to those that still belong to us. Let us "go and do likewise."* Imitate Nehemiah, in his dauntless courage, his ardent zeal, his unfeigned piety, and unwearied perseverance for the good of our New Testament Jerusalem; so doing, we may be followers, not only of him, but of all those "who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises." Amen.

EXERCISES.

When, and by what means was it, that Daniel understood that the seventy years of captivity were about to end? In whose reign was it that the first decree was issued concerning the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and the liberation of the captive Jews? Who was Cyrus? By whom was it prophesied that he would be the instrument in God's hand to do these things? Who was the leader of the Jews on their return to Jerusalem? What was he called by the Persians? Who then acted as high-priest? How was the money raised for the rebuilding of the temple? What was the conduct of the old men when they saw the foundation of the temple laid? Name some of those things which the Jews supposed to be wanting in the second temple, which belonged to the first? From whom did the Jews meet with opposition in rebuilding the temple? When was it finished, and dedicated? From what king did Ezra receive a letter and decree, to encourage the Jews then remaining at Babylon to go up to Jerusalem and establish the worship of the true God? How did Ezra act when he arrived at Jerusalem? Wherein lies the difficulty in adjusting the exact time of all these events? How did Nehemiah act when he had learned that the walls of Jerusalem were broken down, and that the gates thereof were burnt with fire? What encouragement did he receive from his sovereign to go to Jerusalem? How did he begin his work? By whom was he opposed? How did he prevent the mischief that his enemies designed? How long did they take to rebuild the walls of the city? In what manner did they worship God, when the work was finished? Mention some of the reformations which Nehemiah wrought among the people? Give an outline of the character of Ezra and Nehemiah. In what respect should we imitate Nehemiah? What is the meaning of the word, Amen?

CHAPTER XVIII.

Job, one of the Greatest Men of the East, Stripped of all his Wealth—
In Great Bodily Affliction—Three Friends Visit him—Elihu, a
Fourth Friend—God Answers Job out of the Whirlwind—Job Re-

* The Rev. Mr Jameson of Methven.

pents—Job's Three Friends Reproved—Job's Wealth is Doubled before he Dies.

Although the last chapter brought to a close the Bible history of God's transactions with men, particularly with His own people, the children of Israel, yet there are some other historical matters related in the Bible that concern particular persons. The most remarkable of these, not already noticed, are the histories of **JOB**, **JONAH**, and **ESTHER**.

We do not pretend to tell when, or by whom the book of Job was written. Many of the ancients are of opinion that it was written by Moses, and some think that Elihu was the penman of it. Its marks of antiquity are very many, and there can be no doubt concerning the record:—"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man feared God. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a very great household: so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day, and called for their sisters to eat and to drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all."

In the midst of all this prosperity God permitted the wicked one, by kindling of lightning, and stirring up robbers among his heathen neighbours, to bereave him of all his cattle and his wealth in one day, and to destroy all his children, by a tempest, which blew down the house in which they were feasting. When thus stripped of all his wealth, and bereft of all his sons and daughters, he "rent his mantle, shaved his head, fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." In addition to all this, Satan was permitted to smite Job "with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes. Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips." Job having three friends at a distance, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite,

they, upon hearing of all his affliction, "made an appointment together to come to mourn with him, and to comfort him. Having come unto him, they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him : for they saw that his grief was very great. After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day."—Job iii. 1, &c.

When Job's three friends saw him "full of tossings and and fro," and wincing under the direst affliction, they rashly concluded that he was a hypocrite, and had been guilty of very great sins, notwithstanding his outward profession of piety. Having taken this false view of Job's character, they severely reprov'd him for his grievous complaints; and thus they became "miserable comforters." Against all their charges and arguments Job maintained this great truth, "that God did sometimes afflict those who were innocent, for wise and unsearchable reasons;" and he vindicated his own innocence, placing his trust in God.—See chaps. ix., xxxi., &c.

"Against the just, th' Almighty's arrows fly,
For he delights the innocent to try;
To shew their constant, and their godlike mind,
Not by afflictions broken, but refin'd."

Under the violence of his distress, and the most unjust accusations of his friends, Job sometimes spake words of unreasonable despair, and sometimes used rash and unbecoming language against the great God, and vindicated himself too much, as though he had been perfectly innocent before God, as well as before men.—Job vi., &c. Nor were his friends less guilty, in the heat of their disputations, of using harsh and intemperate language. In chap. iv., Eliphaz begins with a very modest preface:—"If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but who can withhold himself from speaking? Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands," &c. How soon does he touch another string, saying, "Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same." In chap. viii., Bildad is still more severe upon Job, saying unto him, "If thou wert pure and upright, surely God would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous. Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water? Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb. So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish: whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web." Thus we have seen Eliphaz hard upon Job, Bildad harder, and Zophar, the hardest of the three, falls upon him without mercy, gives him very ill language, calls

him everything but a saint; or, in Scottish mode, anything but a gentleman; saying unto him, "Should a man full of words be justified? Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?" &c.—Job xi. 2, 3. On what we have here quoted from Zophar, the Rev. Matthew Henry justly puts the question,—“Is this the way to comfort Job? No, nor to convince him neither: doth this become one that appears as an advocate for God and his justice? They that engage in controversy will find it hard to keep their temper.” Hence a little further on in the dispute, we find Job paying back his friends in their own coin, saying unto them, “What ye know, the same do I know also: I am not inferior unto you. Ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value.” After this manner a lengthened and keen controversial contest was kept up between Job and his three friends, in which many great and solemn truths were stated in language most poetical and sublime. But the grand mistake was, they were not applicable to Job; nor did they receive the approbation of God, as we shall afterwards see.

In Job, chap. xxxii., we are informed, that “These three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu against Job, because he justified himself rather than God. He was also angry against his three friends, because they had found no answer, and yet they had condemned Job.” “They had adjudged him to be an hypocrite, and a wicked man, and would not prove him so, nor disprove the evidence he produced of his integrity. There is seldom any quarrel begun, and more seldom carried on to such a length as this was, but there are faults on both sides.” This fourth friend of Job, Elihu, though younger than any of the other three, “appears to be a man of great sense and courage, one that knew well when and how to speak, and when and how to keep silence. Though he had so much respect to his friends as not to interrupt them with his speaking, yet he had so much regard to truth and justice—his better friends,—as not to betray them by his silence.” Having listened to the controversy with youthful modesty and great patience, till patience failed, he breaks silence, tells his old friends, that “Great men are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgment. Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say; and, behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words. Then I said, I will answer also my part, I will shew mine opinion. For I am full of matter, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles.

I will speak, that I may be refreshed : I will open my lips, and answer. Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man ; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away.

Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words, they shall be of the uprightness of my heart ; and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee. Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me, and I will speak. If thou hast anything to say, answer me : speak ; for I desire to justify thee." After this manner Elihu offereth himself with all sincerity and meekness to reason with Job, taking for the foundation of his argument, "The supreme majesty and holiness of God ; the meanness and sinfulness of the best of men in his sight ; his sovereign dominion over all things, and the unsearchableness of his wisdom and conduct toward men." For the whole of his discourse, see Job, from chap. xxxii. to chap. xxxvii.

"Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man ; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me." In what follows, on to chap. xlii., God proves Job's inability to contend with Him from his ignorance of the secrets of nature, asserts His infinite greatness and goodness, that He is the first cause, and supreme director of all things whether in heaven or on earth ; therefore we ought to adore Him with all humility and reverence. "Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear : but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

JOB'S THREE FRIENDS REPROVED.—"And the LORD said to Eliphaz, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends : for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath spoken. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering ; and my servant Job shall pray for you : for him will I accept : lest I deal with you after your folly. So all the three went, and did according as the LORD commanded them : the LORD also accepted Job. And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends : also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house : and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon

him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his son's sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days."

This sublime portion of sacred *writ*, says one of our best Bible commentators, presents us, in very clear and lively characters, these five things, among others:—(1.) A monument of primitive theology. (2.) A specimen of Gentile piety. (3.) An exposition of the book of Providence. (4.) It presents us with a great example of patience, and close adherence to God in the midst of the sorest calamities. (5.) With an illustrious type of CHRIST.

EXERCISES.

By whom is it thought that the book of Job was written? Give some account of Job's wealth. How was it taken from him? With what disease was he smitten himself? What advice did his wife give him? How did he answer her? What were the names of the three friends who came to visit him? Did they take a right view of his character and affliction? What was their mistake? How did Elihu treat Job? By whom was Job answered out of the whirlwind? How did he then act? What of the latter end of his life? With what five things are we presented by the history of Job?

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HISTORY OF JONAH.

We read of this same Jonah 2 Kings xiv. 25, where we find that he was of Gath-hepher in Galilee, in a city that belongs to the tribe of Zebulun, in a remote corner of the land of Israel. We find also that he was a messenger of mercy to Israel in the reign of Jeroboam the second; for the success of his aims in the restoring the coast of Israel is said to be according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by the hand of His servant Jonah the prophet.

JONAH SENT TO NINEVEH.—Were we to abridge this brief but marvellous portion of sacred history, it would tend greatly to destroy its influence; therefore we shall give it as recorded.

"Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of

Amitai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not. And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us: What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou? And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who hath made the sea and the dry land. Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring the ship to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them. Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee. So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows. Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

JONAH'S PRAYER.—Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of

hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that which I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD. And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

JONAH'S MISSION RENEWED.—And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything: let them not feed, nor drink water: but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he said that he would do it unto them; and he did it not.

JONAH'S DISCONTENT.—But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before to Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. There-

fore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live. Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry? So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city. And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live. And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"

Nineveh was at this time the metropolis of the Assyrian monarchy. We read in Gen. x. 11, 12, that "Asshur builded Nineveh; the same is a great city," forty-eight miles in compass; some make it much more: great must have been the number of its inhabitants, as appears from the multitude of those who knew not their right hand from their left. Of the greatness of this city, in wealth, power, and wickedness, as also of its destruction, see the whole book of NAHUM.

From this wonderful history of Jonah we may learn—First, That though God may suffer His people to fall into sin, yet he will not suffer them to lie still in it. Jonah fell fast asleep; but he got a fearful wakening. Second, That God will justify Himself in the methods of His grace towards repenting sinners, as well in the course His justice takes with them that persist in their rebellion against Him.

EXERCISES.

Who was Jonah? To what great city did God send him? For what purpose? Did he obey God's command? Where did he go? What took place when he had gone aboard the ship? What became of him? What was his exercise in the whale's belly? How long was he there? Of whom was he then a type? How did he get to dry land again? Was he sent a second time to Nineveh? What was the preach-

ing he preached to the Ninevites? What effect had it upon them? Did God spare the inhabitants of Nineveh? Was Jonah well pleased with this act of God's mercy? What did God do to convince him of the folly of his anger? What was the argument which God used with Jonah? What two things should we learn from the history of Jonah?

CHAPTER XX.

FROM ABOUT THE YEAR 518 TO THE YEAR 495, B.C.

Ahasuerus—Vashti—Esther—Mordecai, and Haman.

The book of Esther is an account of a plot laid against the Jews to cut them all off, and wonderfully disappointed by a concurrence of providences. Though the name of God be not found in this book, the finger of God is to be seen in it, directing many minute events for the bringing about of His people's deliverance. The whole story confirms the Psalmist's observation, "The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The LORD shall laugh at him: he sees that his day is coming."—Ps. xxxvii. 12, 13.

AHASUERUS.—Which of the kings of Persia this Ahasuerus was, the learned are not agreed. He is supposed by Dr Prideaux to be that second Artaxerxes, king of Persia, who was called Longimanus, and who, perhaps, being influenced by Esther and Mordecai, gave a decree for Ezra to promote the building of the temple at Jerusalem, after the captivity in Babylon.

Scripture informs us that he reigned over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces; that when he had made a most magnificent feast for all his nobles and princes, he gave orders to bring in Vashti, the queen, with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty; for she was fair to look on. But she refused to come; for which disobedience a royal decree was passed and sealed, that she should come no more before the king.

ESTHER.—Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, who had been carried away with Jeconiah, king of Judah. And he brought up Hadassah (that is Esther), his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother alive, and the maid was fair and beautiful, and she obtained grace and favour in sight of the king; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

HAMAN.—After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him. And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed and revered Haman : for the king had so commanded : But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence. And when Haman saw this he was full of wrath ; and sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom. Having great favour with the king, he caused a decree to be made, and copies of the same posted off by the king's commandment, to be published in every province unto all people, that they should be ready against a certain day to massacre all the Jews. When Mordecai perceived all this, he made it known to the queen. Then spake the queen to Mordecai, saying, Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night nor day : I also and my maidens will fast likewise : and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law : and if I perish, I perish. So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him. And it came to pass on the third day, that Esther went in unto the king, and found favour in his sight. And he said unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther ? and what is thy request ? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom. Esther answered, If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared. And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition ? and it shall be granted thee : and what is thy request ? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed. And Esther said, If I have found favour in sight of the king, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do to-morrow as the king hath said. Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart : but when he saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai. Then said Zeresh, the wife of Haman, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to-morrow speak thou unto the king, that Mordecai may be hanged thereon ; then go thou in merrily with the king into the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman well : and he caused the gallows to be made.

MORDECAI HONOURED.—On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records ; and they were read before the king. And it was found written, that Mordecai had given information of a conspiracy by two of the king's chamberlains against his life. And the king said,

What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him. At this very time Haman had come into the court of the king's house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him. And the king said unto Haman, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour? Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself? And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honour, let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head; and let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

Then the king said unto Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken. Then Haman did as the king had commanded. And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman hasted to his house mourning, and having his head covered. And Haman told his wife and all his friends every thing that had befallen him. And they said unto him, If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.

HAMAN HANGED.—So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen. And the king said again unto Esther, What is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom. Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request: for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage. Then the king said unto Esther, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so? And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen. Then the king gave orders to hang him on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. He put

Mordecai into Haman's place at court, and sent orders throughout all his dominions for the Jews to defend themselves.—See Esther vii., and viii. 15. And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad. The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour. And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

THE JEWS SLAY THEIR ENEMIES.—Now in the twelfth month, on the thirteenth day of the same, the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people. For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went throughout all the provinces. Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the sword, and slew upwards of seventy-five thousand of those that rose up against them. All the Jews agreed, by and with the authority of Esther and Mordecai, to keep the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month Adar every year, as days of rejoicing and of giving thanks in memory of this deliverance. These two days were called the days of Purim, from Pur, which signifies a lot; because Haman had cast lots in a superstitious manner, to find out what month or day was the most lucky to execute his bloody device against the Jews.—See Esther ix.

EXERCISES.

Of what is the book of Esther an account? Who was Ahasuerus? Over how many provinces did he reign? What was the name of his first queen? Why was she put away? Who did he take in her place? What relation was Esther to Mordecai? Name the man that was then in great favour with the king? Wherein did Mordecai offend Haman? How did Haman try to revenge himself? How did Mordecai then act? Did Esther and her maidens keep a fast? What was her first request to the king? What advice did Haman get from his wife? How was Mordecai honoured? When the king and Haman had come to the banquet of Queen Esther, what was her request to the king? What became of Haman? How did the Jews defend themselves on the day designed for their massacre? How was this deliverance kept in remembrance by the Jews? What were the two days of the festival called?

CHAPTER XXI.

BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS AND NEIGHBOURING
NATIONS, CONNECTING THE NARRATIVE PORTIONS OF THE OLD
AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

The Jewish Affairs under the High-Priests—Alexander the Great—
The Ptolemies—Antiochus the Great—Seleucus Philopater—Antiochus
Epiphanes—The Maccabees—John Hyrcanus—Aristobulus—
Alexander Jannæus—Civil Wars—Herod the Great—His Character
and Death.

After the death of Nehemiah, Judea was included in the prefecture of Syria, and its government administered by the successive high-priests. Darius Nothus was succeeded by Artaxerxes Mnemon (B. C. 405), and this latter prince by Ochus, in whose reign some of the countries of Western Asia revolted, and among them Judea; but the rebellion was speedily suppressed. In the 18th year of Ochus (B. C. 341), Johanan the high-priest died, and was succeeded by his son Jaddua. Three years afterwards Ochus was poisoned by Bagoas the eunuch, who placed his youngest son on the throne, but when he had reigned about three years, disposed of him also in a similar manner. Darius Codomannus, the last of the Persian emperors, succeeded, who turned Bagoas' treachery against himself, and apparently became firmly established in his empire.

At this time (about 334 B. C.) Alexander the Great invaded Asia with an army of 5000 horse and 30,000 foot, defeated the numerous army of Darius at the river Granicus, and made himself master of Asia Minor. The next year he gained a second victory over Darius near Issus, in Cilicia, besieged Tyre, and then marched into Judea, to punish the Jews for supplying the Tyrians with provisions, and refusing them to himself. While the Grecian conqueror was marching on Jerusalem, according to the account given by Josephus, the high-priest was directed in a dream to go out to meet Alexander with a solemn and gorgeous procession of the priests and people, which he did. The young Greek monarch, struck with sudden awe, presented his reverential salutations to the venerable Hebrew pontiff. For so doing he accounted to the spectators by a dream or vision he had had in Macedonia, of a man similarly attired, who promised him the empire of Persia. Entering the city, he offered sacrifices; and when Jaddua the high-priest had shewn

him the prophecies of Daniel, chaps. viii. 21, and xi. 3, he bade the Jews ask what they had to desire of him; and, according to their request, he granted them the liberty of their own laws and religion, and exemption from tribute every seventh or sabbatic year. Leaving Judea and Palestine, Alexander marched into Egypt, which speedily submitted to him. There he built the city of Alexandria, and peopled it with several nations, among whom were many Jews, to whom he gave the same privileges as to his own Macedonians. The next year he hastened to find out Darius Codomannus, king of Persia, whom he had routed once before, and he now vanquished him in a final decisive battle near Arbela, and became master of the Persian empire. He pushed his conquests eastward, as far as India; but died of intemperance at Babylon, B. C. 323.

Shortly after the death of Alexander his dominions were divided among four of his generals. Cassander had Macedonia and Greece; Lysimachus had Thrace and Bithynia, and some other provinces thereabout; Seleucius had Syria, and the northern and eastern provinces in Asia; the Jews fell under the dominion of Ptolemy, afterward surnamed Soter, who had Egypt, Arabia, and Palestine. These were the four horns of the he-goat mentioned Dan. viii. 22, and xi. 4. In the wars which preceded this final settlement, the Jews having sworn allegiance to Laomedon, one of Alexander's generals, to whom they were at first allotted, afterwards refused to submit to Ptolemy, to whose share they had now fallen. Ptolemy therefore invaded Judea, took Jerusalem, and carried away captive into Egypt about 100,000 of the Jews (B. C. 320). There they were well treated, and large numbers followed and settled in Alexandria, under the government of Ptolemy. In the year B. C. 284, Ptolemy Philadelphus succeeded to the throne of his father; and in his reign the well-known translation of the Old Testament into Greek, called the Septuagint, is said to have been made. By means of this version some knowledge of the religion and writings of the Jews was diffused among the heathen.

The Jews having been greatly persecuted by the Ptolemies, submitted themselves to Antiochus the Great, king of Syria. He granted them many privileges, as he had done to their countrymen who were settled in Babylonia and Mesopotamia. He transported several of them from Babylonia to the Lesser Asia, whence sprang a great part of the Jews that were found in that country in the days of the apostles.

Antiochus the Great was succeeded by his son Seleucus Philopater, who made great efforts to raise money due to the

Romans. Having heard from Simon, the governor of the temple, that great treasures were laid up in that sacred edifice he sent Heliodorus, his treasurer, to seize them; but the intended spoliation was miraculously prevented. Seleucus was shortly after assassinated by Heliodorus, B. C. 176.—(Compare Dan. xi. 20.) Antiochus his brother had been detained as a hostage at Rome, and was on his return when he heard of the death of Seleucus, and the usurpation of Heliodorus, who had formed an agreement with Ptolemy Philopater for the exclusion of Antiochus from the throne. He therefore applied to Eumenes, king of Pergamos, and his brother Attalus, and, by their assistance, and the aid of fair promises, quietly obtained the kingdom.—(Dan. xi. 21.) He assumed the appellation of Epiphanes, or "Illustrious;" but his enemies, with greater propriety, called him Epimanes, "The Madman." In order to assist in raising the money due to the Romans, he deposed Onias, the high-priest, and sold his dignity to his brother Jason for three hundred and sixty talents; soon after deposing him, and reselling the office to Menelaus, the third brother, for six hundred and sixty talents, B.C. 172.—(Dan. xi. 22.)

The reign of this infernal monster of wickedness was so cruel and oppressive to the Jews, that, upon the hearing of a false report that had been made of his death, they made public rejoicings in Jerusalem, whereupon he stormed the city, slew forty thousand of the people, sold as many into slavery, plundered the temple, sacrificed a sow on the altar, and defiled the building by sprinkling it with the broth. Returning to Antioch laden with spoils, he appointed Philip, a Phrygian, a governor of Judea, and confirmed Menelaus in the pontificate A. C. 170.—(Compare Dan. xi. 28.) Two years after this, Antiochus being checked in his designs upon Egypt by the Romans he returned through Palestine, and detached Apollonius, his general, with an army of twenty-two thousand men, who fell suddenly on the city on the Sabbath, while they were at worship, and slew the citizens, with the priests at the altar; he made the sacrifices to cease, led the women and children captive, sacked the city, set it on fire, pulled down the houses and walls and built with the materials a fortress on a high hill in the city of David, commanding the city and the temple.—(Compare Dan. xi. 29-31.) Antiochus then sent a Grecian to teach the remnant of the Jews idolatry, and to punish with cruel death those who should refuse, for which see the second book of Maccabees. The temple of Jerusalem was at last dedicated to the worship of Jupiter Olympus, and that at Samaria to Jupiter, *the Defender of Strangers*.

These impieties and oppressions aroused the heroic spirit of Judas Maccabeus, the son of Mattathias, of the priestly line of Asmonæus, whence the family are often called Asmonæans. Judas, with about nine others, had escaped slaughter in Jerusalem, and, with his father and his four brethren, John, Simon, Eleazar, and Jonathan, had retired to their native town, Modin, in the tribe of Dan. The officers coming to this place to compel the people to idolatry, Mattathias resisted them, and, with his own hand, slew the first apostate Jew that approached the heathen altar, together with the king's officer Apelles, and pulled down the altar.—(Compare Dan. xi. 32, 33.) He then assembled a band of faithful Jews in the mountainous country, and maintained a guerilla warfare against the idolatrous Syrians and apostate Jews. He died about B.C. 166, and was succeeded in his command by his son Judas, who gained over the forces of Antiochus the splendid victories recounted in the first book of the Maccabees. He recovered the temple, repaired and purified it, restored the worship of God, established the feast of the dedication (mentioned John x. 22), and rebuilt Jerusalem out of its ruins, B.C. 165. Antiochus meanwhile finding his treasures failing, made war with the Persians, for the purpose of plundering their country, but was disgracefully defeated; and, returning with rage to destroy Maccabeus and his adherents, he was smitten with an incurable plague in the midst of his journey, his chariot was overthrown, and he was sorely bruised, and forced to be confined to his bed in a little town on the road, where he lay languishing under foul ulcers of body, and sharp terrors of mind, till he died, B.C. 164. It may be observed, that such a sort of death hath befallen many persecutors both in former and later times.—(Compare Dan. xi. 34–45.)

Antiochus Epiphanes was succeeded in his kingdom by his son Antiochus Eupator, a child nine years of age, whose affairs were under the management of Lysias, regent of Syria. This governor, joining with the Idumeans and other neighbouring nations to destroy the Jews, Judas marched into Idumea and subjugated it; he also made a league with the Romans, but was soon afterwards slain in battle by Bacchides, B.C. 161. His command devolved upon his brother Jonathan, who, with his brethren, being of the race of Aaron, officiated both as high-priests and civil governors. Demetrius Soter, meanwhile, had succeeded his father Seleucus Philopater in the kingdom of Syria, which had been assumed by Seleucus, after the extinction of the family of Antiochus. Jonathan renewed the treaty with the Romans, made a league with Alexander, the son of

Antiochus Epiphanes, and with the Lacedæmonians, and was treacherously slain, B.C. 144, at Ptolemais, by Tryphon, a predatory usurper of the kingdom of Syria, on behalf of the infant son of Alexander Balas.

SIMON, the Sagacious, and last of the noble brotherhood, with his sons Judas and Matthias, being murdered by Ptolemy, his son-in-law,

JOHN HYRCANUS, another of his sons, succeeded to the high-priesthood and government of Judea, B.C. 135. At first he made a disadvantageous peace with Syria; but on the accession of Demetrius Nicator, B.C. 130, he shook off the yoke, and maintained his independence, while successive confusions and revolutions were taking place in the succession to the throne of Syria. He extended his dominions, took Shechem, and destroyed the schismatic temple on Mount Gerizim. He also conquered the Idumeans, compelled them to embrace the Jewish religion, B.C. 129, renewed his father's league with the Romans on more favourable terms, and sent his sons Aristobulus and Antigonus, utterly to destroy Samaria, B.C. 109. He died B.C. 107, and was succeeded by his son Aristobulus, who assumed the title and insignia of a king, but died within a year, and was succeeded by his brother Alexander Jannæus, who subdued the Philistines, and compelled them to become proselytes, burnt Gaza, their capital, B.C. 97, and subjugated the Moabites, Ammonites, and part of the Arabians. He also became connected with the war between Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, and her expelled son Ptolemy Lathyrus, who had succeeded Ptolemy Physcon, but suffered the loss of nearly all his army from the attacks of Lathyrus. He was also afterwards overthrown by Obodas, and again by Aretas, kings of Arabia, and died, after a turbulent reign of twenty-seven years, B.C. 79. After his death the government was wisely administered by his widow Alexandra, until her death, B.C. 70. Aristobulus then, aided by the Sadducees, contended for the high-priesthood against Hyrcanus and the party of the Pharisees, and deposed him after he had reigned three months. Aretas, king of Arabia, espousing the cause of Hyrcanus, besieged Aristobulus in the temple. Meanwhile, about B.C. 83, the Syrians, weary of the wars among the Seleucidæ for the dominion, had expelled them all, and submitted themselves to Tigranes, king of Armenia, son-in-law of Mithridates, king of Pontus, which two powerful monarchs now growing powerful in Asia, and having commenced hostilities against the Romans, Pompey the Great was at last sent to terminate the war. He being in the neighbourhood of Judea, Aristobulus applied to him for aid. Pompey, however, decided

in favour of Hyrcanus, and placed him in command of Judea, but would not allow him the regal dignity, and made Judea tributary to Rome, B.C. 63. Pompey intruded into the most holy place, and Crassus afterwards plundered the temple of ten thousand talents of silver for the expenses of his Parthian expedition, B.C. 54. Antipater, a subtle Idumean, was made governor of Judea B.C. 47, though Hyrcanus retained the pontificate. After Antipater's death, his son Herod the Great, by favour of Mark Antony, and by means of much bloodshed, obtained the government B.C. 40, and was confirmed king of Judea and the parts adjacent by Augustus, B.C. 30. His reign was most cruel and tyrannical, but in some respects able and glorious; and he greatly repaired and beautified the temple, nearly rebuilding the whole edifice, with prodigious cost and splendour, as it is described by Josephus. It was built of large stones, each twenty-five cubits long, twelve cubits broad, and eight in thickness, which the disciples desired our Saviour to take notice of, saying, "Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!"—Mark xiii. 1, 2.

Herod the Great, after putting most of his own family to death, died himself by a dreadful complication of diseases. He had a slow fever, an asthma, and an ulcer in his bowels, which bred worms; he languished under extreme pain and torment till he expired, in the seventieth year of his age, and thus seemed to have been smitten of God in a signal and terrible manner for his cruelty, and the multiplied iniquities of his whole life. This was within a year after the birth of Christ, the promised Shiloh. At this time all the known parts of the world were subdued to the Romans, and the nations were in peace; then the Prince of Peace came into the world, and was born at Bethlehem.

Thus we have seen, though Canaan was the land promised by God to the descendants of faithful Abraham, yet, in consequence of their grievous sins, their stubborn disobedience, and their abominable idolatries, their possession of it was always precarious, and often was it absolutely wrested from them. Brief, indeed, were the periods when it could be said that every man sat peacefully beneath his own vine and fig-tree. Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians, on the one side, and Egyptians on the other, and subsequently the Macedonians and the Romans, there was but little cessation of "the battle of the warrior, with confused noise and garments rolled in blood," until the Saviour's advent. Then, indeed,

"No war, or battle's sound,
Was heard the world around.

The idle spear and shield were high up hung;

The hooked chariot stood,
 Unstained with hostile blood;
 The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
 And kings sat still with awful eye,
 As if they surely knew their sovereign Lord was by."

EXERCISES.

By whom was the government of Judea administered after the death of Nehemiah? For what purpose did Alexander the Great march into Judea? How, and by whom was he met? What did the Jews request of him? Where did he go upon leaving Judea? How far did he push his conquests? Of what did he die? Where? What became of his dominions after his death? Under whose power did the Jews then fall? How were they treated during his reign? By whom was he succeeded? What of his reign? To whom did the Jews submit themselves after they had been greatly persecuted by the Ptolemies? How did he act? By whom was he succeeded? What great efforts did he make to raise money due to the Romans? What became of him? By whom was he succeeded? How did Antiochus Epiphanes act towards Jerusalem? In what manner did Apollonius, his general, take and treat Jerusalem? What effect had these impieties and oppressions upon the Jews? Who was Mattathias? What were some of his exploits? How many sons had he? Which of them took command after his father's death? Mention some of the great and good deeds he did in his reign? What was the end of Antiochus Epiphanes? By whom was he succeeded? By whom was Judas Maccabeus slain? Upon whom then did the command devolve? What of his reign? By whom was he slain? Where? What of Simon? What of John Hyrcanus? By whom was he succeeded? By whom was Aristobulus succeeded? What success had he? How long did he reign? By whom was the government administered after his death? Who next contended for the high-priesthood? By whom was the dispute settled? How did Pompey profane the temple? By whom was it afterwards plundered? Who was then made governor of Judea? By whom was he succeeded? What was the character of his reign? In what manner did he rebuild the temple? How did he treat his own family? What manner of death did he die? How long was that after the birth of our Lord and Saviour? To whom were all the known parts of the world then in subjection? Why was it that Canaan, that good land,—land of promise—was almost constantly the scene of war and bloodshed? What should we learn from all this?

CHAPTER XXII.

A PROPHETICAL CONNECTION BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

This chapter will contain a few of the plainest prophecies found in the *Old Testament* that relate to the person, offices, and glories of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and are ful-

filled in the *New*. The first of these is to be found in Gen. iii. 15, where God said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." For the fulfilment of which, see Gal. iv. 4, and 1 John iii. 8—"The Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." This, in the language of prophecy, is called "bruising the serpent's head." The next plain prophecy of Christ we have in Gen. xviii. 18, and xxii. 18, where God informs Abraham that in him and in his seed "shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." For the fulfilment of this prophecy, see Gal. iii. 16—"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made—he saith, To thy seed, which is Christ." The same promise was also given to Isaac, the son of Abraham, Gen. xxvi. 4; and to Jacob, his grandson, Gen. xxviii. 14,—“In thee, and in thy seed, shall all nations be blessed.” Jacob, in his dying address to his son Judah, in Gen. xlix. 10, predicted that "The sceptre (or tribe, as the word signifies,) shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Shiloh signifies, *one that is sent*, which is the frequent character of Christ, that he was sent by the Father,—John x. 36, &c. (Besides, the Jews themselves own that it signifies the Messiah.)

In Deut. xviii. 15, 18, we find Moses prophesied concerning Christ, saying, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me: unto him shall you hearken." When Stephen the martyr was put to death for the sake of Christ, he applies these words unto him.—Acts vii. 37.

DAVID was the next eminent prophet that spake plainly of Christ. In his book of Psalms, he describes His incarnation, His various offices of prophet, priest, and king. In regard to Christ's coming into the world to preach the truth of God for the salvation of men, it is stated in Ps. xl. 6-8, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation," &c. The first part of this Psalm is expressly applied to Christ, Heb. x. 5, where, instead of the words, "Mine ears hast thou opened," it is expressed by the apostle, "A body hast thou prepared me;" and then he shews how Christ made himself a perfect and effectual sacrifice, instead of all the imperfect sacrifices under the law.

Christ's triumph, as he entered into Jerusalem, is foretold in

Ps. viii. 2—"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength," or, perfected praise; for the fulfilment of which see Matt. xxi. 15. His persecution by princes and people is declared in Ps. ii. 1—"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed." All which was fulfilled when Herod, and Pontius Pilate, and the people, both Jews and Gentiles, all rose up against Jesus, and put him to death.—Acts iv. 26, 27. Christ's sufferings, and the manner of His death, is predicted by David in Ps. xxii. 15, 16, 18—"They pierced my hands and my feet. They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." All these things were fulfilled when they nailed His hands and feet to a cross, when they cast lots for His garments, and gave Him gall for his meat, and in His thirst they gave Him vinegar to drink.—Matt. xxvii. 34-48; John xix. 23, 24. His resurrection from the dead, Ps. xvi. 10—"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell;" that is, in the state of the dead; "neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." This was fulfilled in Christ at His rising from the dead to life again, before He had lain three complete days.—Acts ii. 31, and xiii. 33-37; 1 Cor. xv. 4. Christ's ascension to heaven, attended with angels, His triumph over the devil, &c., are foretold in Ps. lxxviii. 17, 18—"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the LORD is among them. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive," &c.; for the fulfilment of which see Eph. iv. 8. Also Col. ii. 15—He "spoiled principalities and powers, and triumphed over them." Christ's exaltation to the kingdom of God's right hand, and to the priesthood of intercession, is described Ps. cx. 1, 4—"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool;" and, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek;" which expressions are applied to Christ, Matt. xxii. 42, 44; Acts ii. 33, &c. Did our limits permit, there might be many other texts cited from the book of Psalms which are interpreted concerning Jesus Christ, and which are applied to Him in the New Testament; but we proceed to state a few from ISAIAH, who has justly been called the Evangelical or Gospel Prophet, on account of his clearly foretelling the greatest variety of events that relate to Christ.

1. As to His birth: that He should be born of a virgin. Isa. vii. 14—"A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel;" which was explained and accomplished when the Virgin Mary brought forth her son Jesus,

Matt. i. 20-23. The name Immanuel signifies "God with us."

2. That He should be rejected by the Jews is foretold by Isa. liii. 1-3—"Who hath believed our report?" &c. But that the Gentiles would receive Him for a Saviour and a King, Isaiah foretells in many places; as chap. xlix. 6, 7—"He shall be a light to the Gentiles, and salvation to the ends of the earth;" and in chap. xlii. 1-6—"Behold my servant, whom I have chosen," &c., "I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."

3. That Christ shall be full of the Spirit of God, of wisdom, knowledge, piety, justice, and goodness, see Isa. xi. 1, 2, which is applied to the Saviour in John iii. 34—"He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." Col. ii. 3—"In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." John i. 32—"The Spirit abode upon him."

4. That He should pronounce terror to the wicked, and peace to the meek and humble, is prophesied Isa. lxi. 1-3—"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," &c.; which prophecy our Saviour applies to himself, Luke iv. 18-21.

5. That He should have a forerunner to prepare His way in the wilderness, Isa. xl. 3—"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God," &c. John the Baptist was his forerunner in the wilderness of Judah, Matt. iii. 1-3.

6. That He should work miracles of healing, Isa. xxxv. 4—"Behold, your God will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." All which was fulfilled by Christ.

7. The sufferings of Christ also, and His meekness and patience under the contempt, reproaches, and persecutions He met with; His death as an atonement for sin; His being numbered with the transgressors; His grave with the rich; His resurrection, exaltation, and intercession, are all so plainly foretold in Isa. liii., and fulfilled in Matt. xxvi., and the following chapters of that gospel, that an atheistical nobleman (one of the Earls of Rochester), when he compared these Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, became a Christian penitent.

JEREMIAH also spake concerning Christ.—See Jer. xxiii. 5, 6,

xxxii., and xxxiii. 14, 15. EZEKIEL, too, spake of Christ under the character of David, who was both a shepherd and a king. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24—"And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David: and I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them. And I will make with them a covenant of peace." Christ was this great shepherd of the people—John x. 1-16—and king of Israel—John i. 49, "Nathanael answered and said unto him, Thou art the son of God; thou art the King of Israel."

The prophet DANIEL describes Christ as the "Son of man who came with the clouds of heaven," &c.—Dan. vii. 13, 14. We have already seen in our lesson "Of Daniel and his times," that the angel Gabriel gave to him a remarkable revelation concerning Christ, the Messiah, "That he should finish transgression, make reconciliation for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, be cut off, but not for himself." All which were fulfilled in their proper seasons.

MICAH the prophet plainly foretold the place where Christ should be born:—"Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."—Micah v. 2. Which was fulfilled, when Mary, the mother of Jesus, went up to Bethlehem with Joseph her husband to be taxed there, and "brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger."—Luke ii. 7.

ZECHARIAH, in chap. ix. 9, foretells that Christ should come to Jerusalem as the king of Zion, "meek, and bringing salvation, riding upon a colt the foal of an ass." For the fulfilment of which, see Matt. xxi. 5.

MALACHI, the last of the prophets, speaks in pretty plain language concerning Christ, in chap. iii. 1—"Behold, I will send my messenger (namely, John the Baptist), and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple." This was fulfilled when "Christ was found in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions,"—Luke ii. 46—and when He reformed and rebuked the evil practices of the priests and people,—Mark xi. 15-18.

The fulfilment of these statements, and many others which relate to the *first* ADVENT of our Lord and Saviour,—His incarnation, birth, life, miracles, sufferings, death, burial, resurrection and ascension to glory,—leave us no room to doubt the truth of the predictions in Scripture concerning His "COMING the *second* time without sin unto salvation."

EXERCISES.

Where do you find the first prophecy concerning the Saviour? And its fulfilment? Where have we the next plain prophecy of Christ? Was it only made to Abraham? Where are we to look for the fulfilment of what David foretold concerning Jesus? Why is Isaiah called the Gospel Prophet? Mention some of the events which he foretold. When and where were they fulfilled? Who became a Christian penitent by comparing the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments? Name some of the other prophets who spake concerning the Redeemer. Where do you find the fulfilment of what Zechariah foretold concerning the Saviour, as king of the Jews?

CHAPTER XXIII.

FROM THE YEAR OF THE WORLD 4004, TO THE YEAR OF OUR
LORD 34.

The Annunciation of Christ's Conception—Mary's Song of Praise—Born at Bethlehem—Birth-Song by the Heavenly Host—The Wise Men from the East—Herod the Great Tyrant, Massacres the Young Children of Bethlehem—Christ is Carried into Egypt—Returns to Nazareth—At the Age of Twelve is found in the Temple—Begins his Public Ministry at the age of Thirty—Proofs of His Being the True Messiah—The Subjects and Manner of His Preaching—His Example.

Having in the first of the two preceding chapters given an historical connecting link between the Old and New Testaments, and in the last of these a "Prophetical Connection," relating to the incarnation, birth, life, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, we now proceed to give a summary of these in detail, as they took place, and are recorded by the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Evangelist Luke having given us a particular account of the parentage and circumstances attending the birth of John the Baptist, proceeds to give us the

ANNUNCIATION OF CHRIST'S CONCEPTION.—"The angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in

her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary : for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest : and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David : and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever ; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man ? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord ; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

MARY'S SONG.—And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden : for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things ; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm ; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things ; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy ; as he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

CHRIST BORN AT BETHLEHEM.—And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger ; because there was no room for them in the inn.

BIRTH-SONG.—And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them : and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not : for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to

all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you ; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men."

And the shepherds went into Bethlehem, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.—Luke ii. 1-16.

THE WISE MEN.—"Now when JESUS was born in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and they presented unto him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way."

FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.—This remarkable event in the life of the child JESUS is recorded by only one of the evangelists:—"The circumstances of the sacred journey, therefore, are almost as great a mystery to us as the wonderful command from the skies, 'Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt.' And perhaps it is a fitting thing that we should know little of so sad an event as the early exile of the only begotten Son of God. How touching a commentary upon the words of the beloved disciple is this flight from the Land of Promise, back again, as we may almost feel, into the Land of Bondage! 'He came unto his own, and his own received him not.' 'He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.' He who gave to the foxes their holes, and to the birds of the air their nests, had not where to lay His head. The plan of mercy seems indeed a mystery, and the cross a contradiction—unto the Jews a stumbling-block

and unto the Greeks foolishness. Yet it was necessary that the Captain of our salvation should be made perfect through sufferings, and the Sun of Israel must shine forth from the night of Egypt."*

Joseph having been told by the angel that Herod only sought for the child Jesus to destroy him, he, therefore, in obedience to the command of God, "took the child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead who sought the young child's life. And he came and dwelt in a city of Galilee, which is called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene."—Matt. ii. 13–23.

Thus we have a particular account of the miraculous conception and birth of our Lord and Saviour, and of the remarkable attestations given, even then, to His divine character. "But from this period, until He entered upon His public ministry, little is known of His abiding place, and even less of His employments. That He was occupied in some way with His heavenly mission cannot be doubted; for when, at the age of twelve years, His virgin mother and Joseph found Him in the temple with the doctors of the law, both hearing them and asking them questions, He replied to their expostulations at His absence, 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business.' From this time, for the space of nearly twenty years, we know nothing of the life of Jesus, except what is declared by the evangelist, that 'He was subject to His parents,' and that 'He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.' The history of the Saviour's advent was not written to gratify a vain curiosity, but to give to the Church an authentic statement of such facts and teachings as were essential to its permanent establishment."

We now come to take notice of

CHRIST'S PUBLIC LIFE AND MINISTRY.—John the Baptist having been sent by God with a commission to preach repentance, and to baptize men, Jesus being about thirty years of

* "The Pathways of Our Lord."

age, "cometh from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? Jesus said unto him, Suffer it to be so now : for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water : and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him : and, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

CHRIST'S TEMPTATION.—And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing : and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them : for that is delivered unto me ; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan : for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence : for it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee : and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, It is written again, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season ; and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."

It is observable that Christ answered and baffled all the temptations of Satan with, *It is written*. He is Himself the eternal word, and could have produced the mind of God, without having recourse to the writings of Moses, but He put honour upon the Scripture ; and, to set us an example, He appealed to what was written in the law.

"Several passages in the other gospels, especially that of St John, are supposed, in the order of the story of Christ's life, to intervene between His temptation and His preaching in Galilee. His first appearance after His temptation was when John Baptist pointed to Him, saying, 'Behold, the Lamb of God.'—John

i. 29. After that He went up to Jerusalem to the passover—John ii. ; discoursed with Nicodemus—John iii. ; with the woman of Samaria—John iv. ; and then returned into Galilee, and preached there."

And as Jesus was walking by the sea of Galilee, He called Peter and Andrew, James and John, who immediately left all and followed him. "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those that were possessed with devils, and those who were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan."—Matt. iv. 23–25.

CHRIST'S TEACHING AND PREACHING.—The manner of Christ's teaching and preaching is illustriously displayed by every word which He spake, either in public or private. Of His public speaking, we have the most copious example in His Sermon on the Mount, beginning Matt., chap. v., and ending vii. 29,—a sermon regarding which we would not even dare to offer an opinion. Is it not infinite as its Author? This much, however, we may venture to say, that it is a sermon from which thousands, and tens of thousands, have been extracted; yet it is the Word of the Lord abiding for ever, unimpaired, in all its freshness and fulness—its excellence in doctrine and precept, like the love and knowledge of its Divine Author, surpassing the grasp of created intellect. Our limits prevent us from doing more than inserting a mere specimen of that inimitable discourse, which we would recommend to be committed to memory by every one who reads it.

"And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and, when he was set, his disciples came unto him. And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,—

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers : for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad : for great is your reward in heaven : for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you."—Matt. v. 1-12.

"Each of these blessings Christ here pronounceth hath a double intendment. First, To shew who they are that are to be accounted truly happy, and what their characters are. Second, What that is wherein true happiness doth consist ; in the promises made to those of such and such characters, the performance of which shall make them happy."

We shall now pass on to the conclusion of this sermon of our Lord and Saviour, where we will see the impression made upon His hearers by the divine precepts and doctrines which He taught.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name ? and in thy name have cast out devils ? and in thy name done many wonderful works ? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you : depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock : and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell not : for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand : and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell : and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine : For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."—Matt. vii. 21-29.

If the people were astonished, who beheld with their eyes the sacred person of our Lord, and heard with their ears His heaven-toned voice, what ought we to be, who can read in our own language the very words which He then spake ?

While "these are faithful sayings, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus came to save sinners"—came, not to judge the

world, but to save the world—came to seek and to save that which was lost—came, not to destroy the law, but to fulfil the law—came, not to do His own will, but the will of His Father who sent Him—came to give His life a ransom for many—came, that whosoever would believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,—yet it may not be out of place here to specify a few of the chief designs of His public life and ministry in this world.

FIRST, It was necessary that He should appear bearing the marks of a Divine commission, and the character predicted of the promised MESSIAH. That He did so, will be seen if we look back to what has already been stated in our "Prophetical Connection between the Old and New Testaments;" to which we may still add a Scripture passage or two, relating to the testimonies from heaven—those at His birth and His baptism have already been noticed. We now state, that in answer to His prayer, "Father, glorify thy name; then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and I will glorify it again." Once more. At His transfiguration, "Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."—Matt. xvii. 1-5.

A SECOND design of Christ's public life and ministry was to preach and inculcate many necessary truths and duties to the people; hence we find Him saying, in Mark i. 38, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth. And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils."

The following are a few of the principal subjects of our Saviour's public preaching:—

1. "He explained the law of God in its full latitude, as it reaches the thoughts, as well as words and actions; by which means he convinced his hearers of sin, and shewed them the need of a Saviour."—See his Sermon on the Mount, Matt. v., vi., vii., and ix. 12, 13. When he sat at meat with publicans and sinners the Pharisees found fault; "but when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physi-

cian, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

2. He taught them the vanity of depending upon any outward privileges, as being "the children of Abraham." He shewed them the danger of putting ceremonies and forms of any kind in the room of real and practical goodness. He taught that there was no entrance into heaven without being born again, or becoming new creatures.

3. He reproved the teachers of the law for mingling their traditions and the inventions of men with the pure appointments of God, saying unto them, "In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, such as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things do ye."—Mark vii. 7.

4. He called the people aloud to repentance of every sin, because the kingdom of the gospel was at hand.—See Matt. iv. 17.

5. He gave particular directions for the practice of particular duties, such as, spiritual worship, prayer, dependence upon God, hearing the Word, giving alms, loving our neighbours, forgiving our enemies, &c.

6. He preached the glad tidings of pardoning grace to sinners who repented of their sins, and believed in Him. He promised the assistance of the Holy Spirit to them that asked it of God. He represented Himself as sent of God, and invited all men to come to Him, and trust in Him, that they might be saved.—Luke iv. 18.

7. He revealed the things of the future and invisible world, the resurrection and the day of judgment, heaven and hell, beyond what the world had ever known before.—See Matt. xxv.; 2 Tim. i. 10, &c.

8. He foretold His own death, His resurrection, and His future glory, and His coming to raise the dead, and to judge the world. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. Watch therefore: for ye know not what

hour your Lord doth come. And what I say unto one, I say unto all; Watch."—Matt. xxiv. 14, &c.

9. He often foretold that the Jews would reject Him and His gospel, and that they should be severely punished for their so doing; He also said many things to prepare the way of the Gentiles into the church or kingdom of the Messiah. Matt. viii. 12.—"But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." See also Matt. xx., xxi., xxiii. 38, &c.

To these examples of the subjects of Christ's public preaching and teaching, we would now state, that "Jesus spake unto the multitude in PARABLES, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." In the 13th chapter of Matthew we have no fewer than eight of these parables, which are designed to represent the kingdom of heaven, the method of planting the gospel kingdom in the world, and of its growth and success.

1. "Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

2. The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man who sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

3. Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all

seeds : but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

4. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

5. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field ; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

6. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls : who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

7. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind : which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world : the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire : there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

8. Every scribe that is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

The import or meaning of the first of these parables is given by Jesus himself, beginning at the 19th verse, and ending at the 23d ; the meaning of the second is asked for by His disciples, and is answered from the 37th verse to the 42d. These, as a specimen, will shew how wisely and well adapted this mode of teaching was to the time, circumstances, customs, and habits of the people among whom the great Divine teacher sojourned. We shall briefly name a few others, stating where they are to be found.

The kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, who would take account of his servants.—Matt. xviii. 23, &c.

The kingdom of heaven is like unto an householder, who went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.—Matt. xx. 1, &c.

Again, There was a certain householder, who planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.—Matt. xxi. 33, &c.

The parable of the fig-tree.—Matt. xxiv. 32, &c.

The parable of the ten virgins.—Matt. xxv. 1, &c.

The parable of the guests.—Luke xiv. 16, &c.

The parable of the lost sheep, which was brought home with joy; of the lost piece of silver that was found; of the lost son who had been a prodigal.—Luke xv. “The scope of all the three last stated, being to shew how pleasing to God the conversion of sinners is,—of great sinners,—and how ready He is to receive and entertain such upon their repentance.”

The good Samaritan.—Luke x. 30.

The unjust steward.—Luke xvi.; and in the same chapter, the rich man and Lazarus.

The importunate widow; the Pharisee and publican.—Luke xviii., &c., &c.

In all these parables the lineaments of the character for which they were intended are so graphically brought out, as to be easily comprehended and kept in remembrance.

To the public sermons and instructive parables of our Lord, may be added an example or two of His disputations with various sects, who basely sought, but in vain, to entangle Him in His speech. “The Pharisees sent unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man. Tell us, therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?” If He denied it, they might accuse Him to the Romans; if He asserted it, they might render Him odious to the Jews. “But Jesus perceived their wickedness,” and avoided their snare, by bidding them “render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.” The same day came the Sadducees, and thought to ridicule Him about the resurrection, by asking to which of her seven husbands a wife would belong in that day. As He proved the resurrection to them from the law of Moses, so He assured them that there was no such relation as marriage in that state.—Matt. xxii. 13–33. After this manner, with a power of reasoning and knowledge altogether peculiar to Himself, Jesus vanquished all the subtlety and sophistry of His enemies; so that the officers who were sent to apprehend Him, when asked why they had not brought Him? could give no other answer than, “Never man spake like this man.”

A THIRD design of Christ’s public life and ministry, was to work MIRACLES for the confirmation of His doctrine, and for the proof of His being sent from God to be the Saviour of the world. We can only quote a few of the most remarkable of these, and point out where they are fully related.

The first of these was performed in Cana of Galilee, where He turned six vessels full of water into good wine.—John ii. 7–11. In Matt. xiv., we find that, with five loaves and two fishes, He

fed about five thousand men, besides women and children ; and after they were all filled, they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. In the fourth watch of the night, " He planted his footsteps in the sea," and trode upon the billows. He rebuked the tempest, and immediately there was a great calm. They brought unto Him all that were diseased, and besought Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment : and as many as touched were made perfectly whole. He gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, strength and vigour to lame and withered limbs.—Mark vii., viii. ; John ix. ; Matt. xx., &c. He healed the leprosy, the fever, the palsy, the dropsy, and other distempers, by a word of command.—Matt. viii., ix. ; Mark i. ; Luke xiv. He raised several persons from the dead, namely, the ruler's daughter in the chamber, the widow's son in the street, as he was carried to his burial, and Lazarus out of his grave, when he had been dead four days.—Mark ix. ; Luke vii. ; John xi.

When the disciples of John Baptist were sent unto Jesus, with this question, " Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? Then Jesus, answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard ; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever is not offended in me." —Luke vii. 19–23.

It may now be observed, that almost every miracle performed by Christ was a deed of love and goodness, whereas many of those done by Moses were deeds of destruction. They were also such as had been predicted should be done in the days of the Messiah ; hence we find Him appealing to His works for a testimony of His commission from God. " If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works : that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him."—John x. 37, 38. " If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin : but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause."—John xv. 24, 25.

A FOURTH design in the public life and ministry of Christ, was to give an **EXAMPLE** to the world of universal holiness and goodness ; hence we find, that when He had washed the disciples' feet, He said unto them, " I have given you an *example*, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord ; neither he

that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."—John xiii. 15–17.

While it is impossible for us to enumerate, or give a list of all the remarkable virtues, graces, and duties wherein Christ appears to be our example, yet it may not be out of place to specify a few. Though, for our salvation, He appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet, "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners"—"the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person"—"full of grace and truth." "He sought the public glory of God with the warmest zeal, and vindicated the honour of his Father's appointment against the corruptions of men." "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—John xvii. 4. He was strictly observant of all the laws of God, even the ceremonial as well as the moral: He observed the Sabbath; He came up to the feast at Jerusalem; He desired to be baptized; He came to fulfil the law of God, and made it His meat and drink. "But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence."—John xiv. 31. He was eminent for heavenly-mindedness, self-denial as to the comforts of this life, and trust in God for His daily bread. He bore the sorrows from the hand of God with the greatest submission, and the vilest injuries from men with perfect patience and the might of meekness, not returning evil for evil, nor railing for railing, but blessing those who persecuted Him. Luke xxiii. 34.—"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." He gave the most glorious instances of goodwill to men, compassion to the miserable, and love to friends, to strangers, and to enemies. "He went about continually doing good." In His life we will all find a pattern of all that is holy, meek, lowly, lovely, great, and good. Hear His gracious invitation and promise:—"Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He was prudent and watchful against the snares of His enemies, and careful to give them no just occasions against Him: this appears in the wisdom of His discourses, and His daily conduct. "After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him."—John vii. 1. He was obedient to His parents, paying them honour; and obedient to magistrates, paying tax and tribute. Matt. xvii. 27.—"Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee."

CICERO has said, "that if virtue were to descend to the world in a human shape, so enamoured would men be with the spectacle, that they would fall down and worship it." And yet virtue did descend in a true humanity—the incarnation of loveliness itself; and so far from doing homage to it, they nailed it, in the person of Jesus, to the accursed tree.

"Jesus was distinguished by the rarest union of integrity and goodness. Every grace that adorns humanity was in Him, and in Him in fulness and symmetry. No virtue jostled another out of its place. None rose into extravagance—none pined in feeble restriction. There was room for love to a mother in a heart filled with love to the world. He felt that He was dying as a Son, while He was making atonement as a Saviour. His patriotism was not absorbed in the wide sweep of His philanthropy. What amiability in His character! What meekness and patience in the midst of unparalleled persecution! No frown was ever seen upon His face, and no scorn was ever upon His tongue; but His eye was often filled with tears, and His bosom overflowed with sympathy, and His lips with consolation. His one pursuit was the good of men; for that by night He prayed, and by day He laboured. Opposition did not deter Him, and ingratitude did not sour Him. With what pains and patience He taught! With what dignity and heroism He suffered! To obtain the noblest of ends, He died the most awful of deaths. He lived in the luxury of doing good, and expired in the triumph of a perfected enterprise. There was no step for self. No unworthy taint soiled His purity, or alloyed His merit. He realized the end of humanity—the glory and enjoyment of God. So perfect in every relation of life; so wise in speech, and so pure in conduct; so large in compassion, and intense in beneficence; He was the incarnation of universal loveliness." While upon the character of our Redeemer, let us look a little more particularly at

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.—"On this momentous topic inability attaches to heart as well as to tongue, to thought, no less than language. O do we not see in the incarnate Lord a pure and fervent love, assuming a nature of clay, feeding the hungry, taming the demoniac, sympathising with the wretched, bleeding on the cross, and prostrate in the tomb! And we must not contemplate its mere warmth, but also its illustrious harmony with the sterner attributes of the Godhead. It is a love of the sinner, but it attempts no compromise with his sin. In its outflow towards us, it neither prostrates holiness nor bribes justice, but throws such a moral lustre over these attributes as to reveal more truly their unchanged and original purity and

brilliance. Thoughts of love nestled in Christ's heart; words of love lingered on His lips; deeds of love flew from His hands, and His steps left behind them the impress of love. It throned its soft halo over His cradle at Bethlehem, and it fringed its mellow splendours the gloom of the cloud under which expired on Calvary. It gave edge to His reproofs, and path to His invitations. It was the magnet that guided Him in all wanderings. It bound Him to the cross, and held Him there and not the iron nail that pierced His hands and His feet. It thrilled in His bosom, and glistened in His eye. It prompted Him to impart miraculous aid on every opportunity. His meekness was but one of its features. It clothed itself in forgiveness toward His enemies, and its last pulsation was in a prayer for His murderers. It was the spiritual atmosphere in which He lived, moved, and had His being. There was love to His mother, love to His kinsfolk, love to His country, love to His disciples, love to His enemies, love to the Church, and love to the whole wide world. Hath He not declared, in John xv. 9, 'As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you'? The life and love of every holy bosom is this precious truth from the lips of Jesus, whose heart was the home of love. May we not appeal to His birth, His baptism, His agony, His death and burial, as tokens of His vast and ineffable fondness, and say, 'I have loved you.' These facts are irresistible evidence, for they are the elements of a history imbued with love. The babe on His mother's bosom, the boy in the temple; the man on the banks of the Jordan receiving the Spirit, and in the wilderness wrestling with the tempter; the victim scourged and crucified; the corpse wrapped in linen and spices, are features of a picture on which the eye is never tired of looking, while the tongue is exclaiming in rapture, 'HEREIN IS LOVE!'"*

A FIFTH design in the public life and ministry of Christ was to call His apostles, and instruct them in their great mission of preaching the gospel. "Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: Simon Peter, and Andrew his brother who were fishermen; James and John, the sons of Zebedee who were also fishers; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, Matthew the publican, who is also called Levi; James the son of Alphæus, who is called the Lord's brother; and Jude brother of James, who is also called Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddæus; Simon, who is called Zelotes; and Judas Iscariot, who afterwards betrayed his Master.

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, *Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of*

* The Rev. John Eadie, D.D., LL.D., Glasgow.

Samaritans enter ye not : but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils : freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves : for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy ; and there abide till ye go thence.

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves : be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men ; for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues ; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake : but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light : and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul : but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward ; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

This is a specimen of the manner in which Christ instructed His twelve apostles, and forewarned them of the difficulties, dangers, and persecutions they might expect to encounter. At the same time He promised them the aids of His Spirit, and His own gracious presence to be with them. For these instructions and promises more fully, see Matt. x. and xxviii. In John xiii. 34, we find Him saying unto them, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another ; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

"Such love as Christ's was 'a new thing in the earth,' and therefore the commandment based upon it and exemplified in it was 'a new commandment.' Besides, one of the ends our Lord had in view was indeed till then unheard of:—'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' Discipleship had been evinced in various shapes, and

discovered by numerous tests. But no 'master' ever dream of imposing such an obligation, and creating by it such a characteristic. The Jew was recognised by his dress and language, his reverence for Moses, his selection among meats and drinks, and his antipathy to all the races of the Uncircumcised. Did you, in any city of Judea, see a man clothed with a deeper than common, and adorned with a phylactery of unusual breadth, did you follow him, and hear him pray with a storian voice to attract all passers by, or see him give alms ostentatiously as to draw upon him the public gaze and admiration, you would have no doubt that you beheld a Pharisee. Our Lord discards what is external; and His followers are to be known not by dress, language, or occupation, but by the meekness which they cherished and exercised toward one another. They were to be known not by mind, but by heart; not by intellect, but by soul."*

EXERCISES.

What was the name of the angel that was sent by God to Mary, mother of Jesus? Repeat the first sentence of Mary's song, and last. Where was Christ born? Who first published His birth? Whom? By whom was He first worshipped? Of what bloody crime was Herod guilty? How did Christ escape? When did they retain Him? Where, and among whom, was Jesus found when He was twelve years of age? At what age did He begin His public ministry? What was remarkable about His baptism? By what did He baffle all the temptations of Satan? Where have we the most copious example of His preaching? Mention the first design of His public ministry. second. How many parables have we in the 13th chapter of Matthew? Name any one of them, and give its meaning. With what disputes had He disputations? What was the third design of His public life and ministry? Name one or two of these miracles. What was the fourth design of His public life? Mention a few of the virtues which Christ left as examples for us to follow. What can you see in the LOVE OF CHRIST? What was the fifth design of His public life? Give the names of the apostles? By what were all men to know that they were Christ's disciples?

* Rev. Dr Eadie, Glasgow.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FROM THE YEAR OF THE WORLD 4004, TO THE YEAR OF OUR
LORD 34—*continued.*

Christ's Entrance into Jerusalem—He Purifies the Temple—Foretells the Destruction of the City—The Last Supper—Gethsemane—Trial and Sentence—Christ's Crucifixion—His Burial—Resurrection, and Ascension.

Having in the last chapter briefly adverted to the nativity, public life, and ministry of our Saviour, let us now proceed to the solemn contemplation of the awful scenes of His sufferings, respecting which the sacred narratives distinctly shew the importance of minute details. I would therefore say, in the language of one who visited these scenes lately,* "Come now, believer in the gospel, be my companion, while for eight days, the most eventful of its history, we look around, and upon 'Zion, the city of our solemnities.'

We begin on SUNDAY before the resurrection of our Lord. The Jews in Jerusalem are now preparing for their great feast, which, during this week, bears precisely the same relation to Good Friday and Easter Day, as when 'Christ our passover was sacrificed for us.' For some days before, our Lord had been dwelling in Ephraim with His disciples. This was a city north from Jerusalem, in the direction of Jericho, and near the wilderness of the temptation. He went thither to escape the excitement produced in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood by His miracles, especially the raising of Lazarus. He wished also to place himself for a time beyond the reach of the chief priests and Pharisees, who were already taking counsel to destroy Him, saying, 'What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.' But the passover being nigh at hand, and the people from all parts of Judea collecting together for its celebration at Jerusalem, the Saviour also, with full knowledge of His impending sufferings, left His seclusion, and, with His twelve disciples, turned His face towards that city, and the altar of His sacrifice. His path was over a rough and mountainous region, ill cultivated, and little frequented. A wearisome walk of about six miles brought Him in view of a pleasant village, lying upon the slope

* *The Rev. J. M. Wainwright, D.D., New York.*

of a hill towards the east. This was His well-known and favourite place of resort, and here was His frequent abiding-place in the house of His friend Lazarus, the foundation of which is still pointed out; and in memory of the friend of Jesus, the Turks, at this day, call their village *Lazari*. At a short distance, higher up upon the right, are still to be seen a few miserable huts, as marking the place where Bethphage stood. Here it was that our Lord, wearied with His walk over a mountain road, or rather in view of the fulfilment of an ancient prophecy, sent two of His disciples, 'saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, Ye shall say, the Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.' The direction having been complied with, our Lord, seated on the humble animal, and attended by the twelve, pursued His journey.

CHRIST'S TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION INTO JERUSALEM.—But it is no longer the twelve, or small companies, that are making their silent way towards the city. An eager and shouting multitude, cutting branches from the neighbouring palm-trees, are strewing them and their garments upon the way, over which some honoured individual is passing. Their shouts can be distinctly heard, and from the multitudes that went before, and that followed, in united chorus, the cry is, 'HOSANNA to the SON of DAVID! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! HOSANNA in the highest!' As yet, the crowd upon the walls and parapets of Jerusalem see not the object of this exalted praise, so great around Him is the throng of His disciples, of the blind, the lame, the sick, whom He had healed, and of the multitude, whom the fame of His miracles, and the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth, had collected to Him. Now, nigh to the gates the ranks open, and what do they see to justify this tumult of zeal? Not the stately air of an earthly king or conqueror, nor His splendid array. 'Behold, O daughter of Zion, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.' Well might the city be moved, and all cry out, 'Who is this? Who is this, in appearance so unassuming, riding upon the humblest of animals, attended by poor fishermen of Galilee, and yet thousands are shouting His praise?' They hail Him Son of David, and exhibit joy at His coming, such as David never saw, when returning most triumphant from his enemies. To the demand of simple, honest curiosity, and the question of scornful priestly pride, the multitude answer alike, 'This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.' We may suppose 'the two blind men, whom He

had just healed, press forward, and say, this is He who had compassion on us, and touched our eyes, and immediately our eyes received sight. Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary, proclaim Him the conqueror of death and the grave. The sick restored to health, the lame man leaping as an hart, the deaf whose ears are unstopped, the dumb whose tongue is loosed, all eagerly and gratefully recount the wonderful deliverances wrought by Him. Numbers, too, who had listened to His doctrine, cry out, 'Never man spake like this man!'

The Prophet, Priest, and King, thus heralded by heaven-taught acclamations, proceeds at once to 'the temple of God, casts out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased.'—Matt. xxi. 12-15.

It was now eventide; but the Lord accepted no abiding-place for the night within the city's walls. He sought the repose of Bethany, and, crossing the Kedron, before His toilsome walk over Olivet, rested for a while at its foot, in the garden to which 'he often resorted with his disciples.'

MONDAY.—This morning, as He returned from Bethany into the city, He hungered. 'And when he saw a fig-tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away.'—Matt. xxi. 19.

When they were come to Jerusalem, going immediately to the temple, He finds that His admonition of yesterday has been forgotten, if not despised, and the money tables and the ex-changers have again thrust themselves into the holy place. But the Lord again cast them all out, and would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple; and He taught, saying unto them, 'Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.'—Mark xi. 17.

After thus purifying the temple, Jesus continues His instructions; for we are told that He taught daily in the temple, and the people were very attentive to hear Him. But this so much the more excited the indignation of the chief priests and Pharisees, and prompted them to seek how they might destroy Him. He was still, however, in such favour with the people,

that they dared attempt nothing openly, and suffered Him peaceably to return again to Bethany.

TUESDAY.—Again, in the morning, our Lord, with His disciples, leaves Bethany for Jerusalem, and ‘as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away.’ Jesus improves the occasion to speak to them of the power of an undoubting faith. Arrived at the temple, He at once enters upon His work of teaching the people, when He is interrupted by the captious objections raised by the chief priests and elders to His authority. The whole day seems to have been passed in the temple. He discoursed upon many important subjects, illustrated them by striking parables, and, as has formerly been noticed, He defeated the malicious attempts of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Herodians, who tried successively to entangle Him by insidious and ensnaring questions.—See Mark xi. 29, and chap. xii. throughout. At last, the measure of His forbearance having been exhausted, He turns to the multitude, and to the disciples, saying, ‘The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.’ Having warned His disciples against these corrupt teachers, whom He denounces in the 23d chapter of Matthew as blind guides, hypocrites, serpents, and generation of vipers, then, sorrowfully reflecting upon the ingratitude and obstinacy which His benevolent labours had met with, and upon the merciless return He was about to receive, He utters that touching expostulation, ‘O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them who are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!’ Here Jesus saw that poor widow, whose name is unknown, but whose deed of self-denying, unostentatious charity, in casting in two mites into the treasury, was more in the sight of heaven than all the offerings of the rich.—Mark xii. 43.

‘As Jesus went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what build-ings are here!’ Then came that fearful prophecy, so improbable, as it doubtless seemed when uttered, but yet so literally fulfilled—‘There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be cast down.’

This night He retired, we are told, to the Mount of Olives, but whether He went as far as Bethany we are not informed.

WEDNESDAY.—Last night our Lord abode in the mount that is called the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning, as He sat there still, His disciples came unto Him privately, to ask, ‘When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?’ Then follow the fearful prophecies of the judgment, and of the destruction of the city and temple:—‘There shall be wars and rumours of wars, nation rising against nation, kingdom against kingdom, earthquakes in divers places, famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows. After the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of God, but my Father only. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.’ The earnest warning, Watch! is again enforced by the parable of the ten virgins and the talents, and the dread discourse is ended with the description of that day, ‘when the Son of man shall come in his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.’—Matt. xxv. 46.

‘And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high-priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.’ In the evening of this memorable day, Simon the leper receives the Divine Physician who had healed his loathsome malady, and Lazarus is one of them that sit at the evening feast. His sister Mary comes to serve, and, in the fulness of her love, brings a box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His head as He sat at meat. The disciples objected to this action of Mary, not for its singularity, but its expense. The traitor Judas was the instigator of this complaint; not, says St John, *that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had*

charge of the common purse. Much has been written about the symbolical meaning of this transaction, but the only authentic explanation is founded in our Lord's own words—'In that she hath poured this ointment upon my body, she did it for my burial.' Yes, Mary, thy simple deed of love shall be proclaimed to millions yet unborn :—'Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.'

THE BETRAYAL.—While all this was passing in the house of Simon, 'one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.' Judas was now weary of a service less lucrative than he had expected, and awaited only a good opportunity to desert it with some shew of an excuse. When our Saviour rebuked him for objecting to the pious deed of Mary, he felt the resentment of detected hypocrisy and disappointed avarice. Thenceforth he sought opportunity to betray Him in the absence of the multitude—a deed of darkness for which the fitting season was night!

THURSDAY.—On the evening of this day the Paschal feast was celebrated by our Lord and His disciples. The occasion had been anticipated and spoken of for some time as one of the deepest interest. 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?' 'With desire,' said our Lord, 'I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.' In the morning, therefore, while they were yet at Bethany, His disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us. And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.'

The site of this guest-chamber is still pointed out, on that part of Mount Zion which is now outside the walls, at a short distance from the Zion Gate; but the ancient city covered this space. Was not this, too, the same upper room mentioned in sacred history as the scene of other events of unspeakable importance to the Church? Was it not here that Jesus, after His

resurrection, more than once visited the disciples, and also confirmed the faith of Thomas? Here that Matthias was chosen to fill the bishopric which Judas lost by transgression? Here that, after the Lord's ascension, He sent down, on the day of Pentecost, His Holy Spirit in cloven fiery tongues? And here, that the Church first stately sanctified the Lord's day, and the twelve constantly resorted with the faithful, until that period when, in obedience to the command of their Divine Master, they went forth to 'teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?'

The sun having set, the first day of the feast, according to the Jewish mode of reckoning from evening to morning, began. Jesus, with His disciples, enters the chamber, and they all recline at the table which had been prepared. Judas is amongst them, for his treachery is as yet known only to the Lord. His feet were washed by those Divine hands, but he was not thereby rendered clean, nor was his heart subdued by this manifestation of humility and love. The Jewish passover he may also eat, and take his portion of the lamb slain that morning; but was he permitted, with those sacrilegious hands and those false lips, to touch the symbols of that Immaculate Lamb, which, through his treachery, was now about to be immolated? When our Lord spake those words, which must have pierced his guilty soul, 'What thou doest do quickly,' Judas soon left the room to complete his traitorous design.

THE LAST SUPPER.—'And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.' This affecting service is ended, the promise of the Comforter given, and the hymn sung, when Jesus says, 'Arise, let us go hence.' To the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane they now direct their steps. They probably left the city by the nearest gate, and, under the light of the full moon, found their way down the steep descent of Mount Zion, without the walls, leaving the valley of Hinnom on their right. During this walk, through vineyards which clothed the hill sides, He spake of Himself as the true vine, and taught them, that, if they, as branches, would bear fruit, they must abide in Him. The instruction, warning, and admonition, so fully recorded in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of *St John*, filled up the precious hour. And once they

rested, perhaps, beneath the overhanging walls of the temple, and within the murmuring sound of Siloa's brook, and there the Lord poured forth to His Father that earnest prayer for them and for all who should believe on Him through their word.—John xvii.

As they approach the scene of betrayal, they are warned again, 'All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.' Peter protests, but his fall is foretold; they all protest their allegiance, but within a very short distance is the place, and ere the lapse of a few short hours, the time, when their promises are forfeited.

GETHESEMANE.—'And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me. And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.' Here, after a momentary resistance on the part of Peter, 'all the disciples forsook him, and fled.' From this period to the crucifixion but a few hours transpire, yet more space is given to their re-

cord in the sacred narratives than elsewhere to months and years.

CHRIST CONDEMNED BY THE HIGH-PRIEST.—‘ And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high-priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death ; but found none : yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high-priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing ? what is it that these witness against thee ? But Jesus held his peace. And the high-priest said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said : nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high-priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy ; what further need have we of witnesses ? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye ? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him ; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee ?

PETER DENIETH HIS LORD.—Now Peter sat without in the palace : and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them ; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.’ Peter, who wept so bitterly for denying Christ, never denied Him again, but confessed Him openly, and in the mouth of danger, so far from ever saying, I know not the man, that he made all the house of Israel know assuredly, that this same Jesus was Lord and Christ.

FRIDAY.—‘ When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death : And when they had bound him, they led him away,

and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the Roman governor. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him, Thou sayest it.' Pilate being satisfied of his innocence, and finding he was a Galilean, sent him to Herod, who was at Jerusalem at that time; he questioned with Him in many words, but Jesus answered him nothing. 'And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate. And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: no, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.'

CHRIST SENTENCED TO DEATH BY PILATE.—Now the multitude, crying aloud, began to desire Pilate to do as he had ever done unto them. And he said, 'Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? Then cried they all, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber, who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison. Pilate, therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but rather that a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe

off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.'

Now, 'like a lamb to the slaughter,' He is led through the 'sorrowful way,' that *Via Dolorosa*, which has long been venerated as the path from a court without justice, to a death without mercy! The street which bears this sad descriptive name, extends by a crooked course from the palace of the Roman governor to Calvary.

'And as they led Jesus away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus. And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST.—And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, and saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS**.

And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magda-

lene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. And they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw what was done, they glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man; or, as Mark has it, 'Truly this man was the Son of God.' The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, in order that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath-day, besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the two who were crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. These things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

CHRIST'S BURIAL.—After this Joseph of Arimathæa, a good man, and a just, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, who at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath-day according to the commandment.

Then came the chief priests and the Pharisees unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead : so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch : go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.—In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake : for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow : and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye : for I know that ye seek Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here : for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead ; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee ; there shall ye see him : lo, I have told you. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre ; for they trembled and were amazed : neither said they anything to any man ; for they were afraid. Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre ; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves ; and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad ? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in

Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, who were early at the sepulchre; and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. And certain of them who were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would go further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them.

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day : and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you : but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.'

Five times Christ was seen the same day that He rose :—By Mary Magdalene alone, in the garden—John xx. 14; by the women, as they were going to tell the disciples—Matt. xxviii. 9; by Peter alone; by the two disciples going to Emmaus; and now, at night, by *ten* of the disciples, Thomas being absent. The other disciples told him, ' We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them : then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side : and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas, and Nathanael, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. They all entered into a ship, went a fishing, and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore : but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes, being an hundred and fifty and three, yet was not the net broken. Jesus saith unto them, *Come and dine.* Then he taketh bread, and giveth them, *and fish likewise.*

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the *third* time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the *third* time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.'—John xxi. 15–17. Thus we have now seen 'by many infallible proofs, that the Lord is risen indeed.' "

CHRIST'S ASCENSION, the narrative of which is very brief.—Christ having led out His disciples as far as to Bethany, He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them; "and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—Acts i. 10. "This same Jesus shall come again in His own person, clothed with His glorious body; this same Jesus, that came once to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, will appear the second time without sin—Heb. ix. 26; that once came in disgrace to be judged, will come again in glory to judge. The same Jesus that has given you your charge, will come again to call you to an account how you have performed your trust. He, 'and not another.'—Job xix. 27. He shall come in like manner. He is gone away in a cloud, and attended with angels; and behold, He will come in the clouds, and with Him an innumerable company of angels. He is gone up with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet—Ps. xlvii. 5; and He will descend from heaven with a shout, and with the trump of God.—1 Thess. iv. 16. He shall appear in majesty. In His own glory, the glory of His Father, and in that of His holy angels, that bright humanity shall outshine the sun, and supply its place to a startled world. For 'He shall appear' in the glory of His original Godhead, blended with the majesty of crowned Redeemer, arrayed in the regal apparel of Universal Governor, surrounded by a dense and innumerable retinue, and about to exercise His last and loftiest prerogative of judgment,—then—then—'shall we see Him as he is.' "

IMPORTANTS EVENTS IN PROFANE HISTORY DURING THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

Years of
Christ's
Life.

1. A plot of Antipater against his father Herod is discovered.
2. Antipater is convicted before Quintilius Varus, and put to death.
3. Herod dies. Archelaus succeeds him in the government of Judea.
4. This year begins the Christian era.
5. Caius Cæsar, grandson to Augustus, passes through Jerusalem to march against the Armenians.
7. Tiberius is recalled from Rhodes, and returns to Rome.
8. Caius Cæsar dies after his return from Armenia.
9. Augustus, on the death of his two grandsons, adopts Tiberius.
10. Archelaus is accused before Augustus for his mal-administration. He is banished to Lyons, in Gaul. Coponius is made Procurator of Judea.
15. Marcus Ambivius is made Procurator of Judea. Salome, the sister of Herod, dies.
17. Tiberius is admitted into the government with Augustus.
18. Annius Rufus is made Procurator of Judea.
19. Augustus Cæsar dies. Tiberius succeeds him.
20. Valerius Gratus is made Procurator of Judea.
22. Germanicus, the adopted son of Tiberius, is sent to quell disturbances in the East.
23. Germanicus reduces Cappadocia and Commagene into the form of Roman provinces.
24. Germanicus is poisoned at Antioch by Piso, President of Syria.
25. Piso being accused of this murder, kills himself.
28. Valerius Gratus removes Annas from being high-priest, and gives the office to Ismael, the son of Fabus.
29. Eleazar, the son of Annas, is made high-priest.
30. Simon, the son of Camith, is made high-priest in place of Eleazar. Caiaphas succeeds him.
31. Pontius Pilate is made Procurator of Judea.
32. Herod puts to death John the Baptist.
33. Pontius Pilate condemns Jesus to be crucified.

EXERCISES.

Towards what city did Jesus turn His face with His twelve disciples, when He had left Ephraim? To what village did He send two of them, in order that they might bring Him an ass, with her colt? What took place on His way to Jerusalem? How did He act when He went into the temple? How were the chief priests and the scribes affected? Did He remain in the city that night? Where did He and His disciples go? What took place on MONDAY? On TUESDAY? On WEDNESDAY? What questions did the disciples ask of Jesus on Wednesday? What did He foretell concerning Jerusalem and the temple? Where was Jesus in the evening of this memorable day? What took place there? What of His betrayal? Where did He celebrate the Paschal feast, and institute the ordinance of the Lord's Supper? What of Gethsemane? By whom was Jesus first condemned? By whom was He sentenced to death? What of His CRUCIFIXION? Of His BURIAL? Of His RESURRECTION? Of His ASCENSION? Of His coming to JUDGMENT? Mention some of the important events which took place during the life of Christ.

CHAPTER XXV.

A.D. 34—A.D. 70.

The Christian Church in Infancy—The Feast of Pentecost—The Increase of the Church—Paul's Account of Himself—His Trials and Journeys—The Political State of Judea—Vespasian—Titus—Siege and Destruction of Jerusalem.

It is natural for our young readers now to ask, What became of Christ's disciples, and other followers, after that His bodily presence had been withdrawn? We answer in His own words. Before leaving them, He said unto them, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. The Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself: that where I am, there ye may be also. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." These words spake Jesus *unto them* immediately before His agony in the garden. And *after His resurrection*, before parting with them, He said unto

them, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." The disciples having thus received from their Lord and Master, a blessing, a commission, and a promise, they returned from the mount called Olivet, and came to Jerusalem ; "and when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Matthew, and Bartholomew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN INFANCY.—And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and told that the number of the names on the roll at that time constituting the Church, including men and women, were only about an hundred and twenty. Though few in number, union to Christ, and union with one another, was their strength : they met in holy harmony—"they all continued with one accord." The first transaction they set about as a Church, was to elect one of their number to fill the room of Judas, who had perished by his own hand, after that he had basely betrayed his Lord. Having appointed two, they prayed, and said, "Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots ; and the lot fell upon Matthias ; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles."—Acts i. 12-26.

FEAST OF PENTECOST.—So called, being the fiftieth day after the Passover, and ten after the Ascension of Christ. On this day the Spirit of God was sent down upon the apostles, and those that were with them ; and the house in which they were met was filled with "the sound as of a rushing wind. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance ; to the astonishment of the Jews, and a multitude of proselytes of all nations that were then at Jerusalem."—Acts ii. 4-11. To this multitude Peter preaches, bears witness to the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, and the pouring out of the Spirit of God on men ; partly from his own knowledge, and from these present visible effects thereof among them,

and partly from the prophecies and promises of Scripture, he leads them to Christ as a Saviour and Lord, calls them to repentance of their sins, and a profession of their faith in Jesus, by being baptized in His name. "And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."—Acts ii. 41, 42. "This was the proper beginning of the kingdom of Christ, or the Christian dispensation; which was set up in the world in its glory, at the pouring down of the Spirit, after the ascension of Christ, and His exaltation to the government of the world and the Church."

For the wide spreading of the gospel of Christ, the increase of the Church, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus into Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles, the miracles wrought by the apostles in the name of Christ, their trials, persecutions, sufferings, and martyrdoms, see the whole of the Acts of the Apostles. Without entering into these at full length, or even attempting to abridge them, we must content ourselves by briefly stating Paul's account of himself to the Jews, his defence before Felix, Festus, and King Agrippa.

"Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you. I am verily a man who am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prison both men and women. As also the high-priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them who were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. . . . And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. Then the Jews hearing him lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live."—Acts xxii. 1-22. After this Paul had several narrow escapes for his life, for which see Acts xxiii.

When accused and tried before Felix, he defended himself in the most masterly style. "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and an-

swered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." We do not read that that season ever came. Two years after this, Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound at Cæsarea. About ten days after this, "Festus sitting on the judgment-seat commanded Paul to be brought. And when he was come, the Jews who were come down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove. Then Festus, willing to please the Jews, said to Paul, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and be judged of these things before me? Paul, like himself, then said, I stand at Cæsar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest."

Soon after this, on a certain day, King Agrippa, with the chief captains and principal men of the city, having come into the place of hearing, Festus commanded Paul to be brought forth; and having introduced him to the king and his court, "Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself."—See Acts xxvi. 2-24. "And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But Agrippa said unto Paul, ALMOST thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both *almost*, and ALTOGETHER such as I am, except these bonds. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar."—For his voyage to Rome, and arrival there, see the two last chapters of the Acts.

"And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him." "During these two years he wrote his epistle to the Galatians; then his second to Timothy; then those to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon; and lastly, his epistle to the Hebrews, just after he was set at liberty; but how or by what means he obtained his liberty we are not told. Tradition saith, that after his discharge he went from Italy to Spain, thence to Crete, and so with Timothy into Judea, and from thence went to visit the churches in Asia, and at length came a second time to Rome, and there was beheaded in the last year of Nero." Of himself and his fellow-labourers, this Planter of the Churches thus speaks:—"We preach not ourselves, but

Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." Of himself he says, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."—2 Cor. xi. 24–28.

POLITICAL STATE OF JUDEA.—“When Festus came into Judea, he found the whole country infested with banditti, who murdered the inhabitants, plundered the houses, and set fire to the villages. These robbers were called Siccarii, on account of certain small swords called Siccae, which they carried concealed under their garments. Festus sent out patrols of soldiers to destroy these men, and to deliver the country from their tyranny. But he was soon succeeded by Albinus, as Procurator of Judea, who was very remiss in his endeavours to correct these abuses; on the contrary, there was hardly any wickedness of which he was not himself guilty. But while such was the administration and character of Albinus, Gessius Florus, who succeeded him, was still more flagitious. Indeed, wicked as Albinus was, yet, in comparison of Florus, he was a most excellent governor; for this latter omitted no kind of rapine or plunder. His turpitude and effrontery were unparalleled even by all who had gone before him. At this period Cestius Gallus was President of the Roman possessions in Syria, and resided at Antioch. Upon his coming to Jerusalem during the season of the Passover, the Jews gathered round him in numbers, not fewer than three millions, beseeching him to free them from the cruel tyranny of Florus. Cestius dismissed them, with an assurance that their governor would treat them more gently in future.

Cestius returned to Antioch, and Florus continued to grow in crime; and it was at this time that the occasion of the war commenced. At Cæsarea the Jews and their religion had received insult once and again; having complained to Florus, *instead of giving them redress, he put them in prison. Upon this the inhabitants of Jerusalem became exasperated, treated him at last with ridicule and pasquinades. Being thus insulted, instead of quelling the disturbance at Cæsarea, he marched to*

Jerusalem, and did everything in his power to provoke the Jews to revolt.

The confusion in Jerusalem at the arrival of Florus was tremendous, and his cruelties so excessive, that in one day upwards of three thousand of the populace were slain. Meanwhile, the conduct of the Jews was not unstained by treachery to the Romans, particularly in their slaughter of the Roman guards in the Castle of Antonio, after having laid down their arms on terms of peace. This outrage brought up Cestius from Syria with an immense army, who besieged Jerusalem; and certainly, had he continued the siege at that time, the Jews had sooner met the fate that had hung over them. However, he raised the siege, and fled from Jerusalem, pursued and discomfited by the Jews; and having thus tarnished the glory of the Roman arms, prepared for the unhappy Jews all the horrors which yet awaited them.

On this state of affairs being reported to Nero, the Roman emperor, he appointed Vespasian, one of his most able and experienced generals, to go into Judea to take command of the army there, to punish the refractory Jews, and restore the tarnished honour of the Roman legions.

Vespasian having sent his son Titus to Alexandria, in Egypt, to bring up two of the Roman legions which were in that country, proceeded himself into Syria. From Antioch he went to Ptolemais, a city in Palestine, where Titus joined him with his soldiers.

While Vespasian was in Judea, he besieged the different cities there and in Galilee, and, after various vicissitudes, succeeded in making himself master of the whole country. During this part of the war the Roman emperors who succeeded Nero were deposed and slain, and the army of Vespasian proclaimed him emperor. Upon this occasion Vespasian went to Rome, and the command of the army, as well as the whole conduct of the war, devolved on Titus his son.

At this time, among the Jews 'there were three captains,' says Tacitus, 'and as many armies.' Simon had the remotest and largest parts of the wall under him; John had the middle parts of the city under him; and Eleazar had fortified the temple itself. Battles, factions, and burnings, were common to them all, but war abroad produced peace between those that were at home.

THE SIEGE, A.D. 70. — Against this city and nation, Titus resolved to fight by ramparts and ditches, since the situation of the place did not admit of taking it either by storm or surprise.

When the Romans had finished their works, they brought

their engines to bear on the walls of the city. The different factions then cried out that they were acting as if in concert with their common enemy, and said, that if they could not enter into a lasting concord, they ought at least to unite, in their present circumstances, against the Romans. A volume longer than this altogether would not be sufficient to contain a detailed account of the manner and consequences of this SIEGE. Suffice it to say, that all means of escape, and all means of relief, being cut off from the Jews, the city exhibited a spectacle of horror, misery, and woe, such as had never before been seen under the light of the sun. Then was fulfilled those words of the Divine Redeemer:—‘The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee.’ The famine, in its resistless progress, devoured whole houses at once. The upper rooms were full of women and children, who were dying; the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged. When Titus, in going his rounds, saw the valleys full of the dead, and the putrefaction running among them, he groaned, and, spreading forth his hands to heaven, called the gods to witness that this was no act of his. As Titus advanced his works the Jews set fire to the north-west cloister, and thereby made a beginning to the burning of the sanctuary. When Titus saw that all the efforts he made to preserve a foreign temple only tended to the destruction of his own troops, he gave orders to set the gates on fire. At last, the flames burst from the holy house itself, and it was burnt down, notwithstanding all that Titus desired and all that he attempted to do to save it.

Thus the most admirable of all the works on earth was destroyed. The decree, inevitable and unalterable, which had gone forth against it, brought it to the dust! and that on the same day of the same month on which it was burned by the Babylonians. The number of the years from its first foundation by Solomon to this destruction in the second year of Vespasian, are one thousand one hundred and thirty years, seven months, and fifteen days; and from the period of its second building by Haggai—in the second year of Cyrus the king—to this its second destruction, were six hundred and thirty-nine years and forty-five days.

We have now seen, that ‘the black cloud of woes foretold by the Saviour of men had burst at once upon the devoted land which had rejected and crucified the Son of God. (Had the fighting armies of the historian descended from the sky, they *could not* have wrought more woe upon Palestine.) Then

arose the voice of wailing, when the four sore judgments of God—fire and sword, famine and pestilence—were poured out together upon His disobedient children. Who can call to mind that fearful epitome of misery, captivity, and blood, in the history of ploughing up the Holy City by the myrmidons of Titus, without exclaiming with Him who wept over it, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets!” Once brought under the yoke of the Romans, Jerusalem was ever after, and is still, “trodden down of the Gentiles.” The Cross is yet in the dust, and the Crescent waves proudly to-day above the battlements of Jerusalem.

Shall there be no restoration?

“Yes, Salem! thou shalt rise; thy Father’s aid
 Shall heal the wound His chast’ning hand has made;
 Shall judge the proud oppressor’s ruthless sway
 And burst his brazen bands, and cast his cords away,
 Then on your tops shall deathless verdure spring;—
 Break forth, ye mountains! and ye valleys sing!
 No more your thirsty rocks shall frown forlorn,—
 The unbeliever’s jest—the heathen’s scorn;—
 The sultry sands shall tenfold harvests yield,
 And a new Eden deck the thorny field.
 E’en now, perhaps, wide waving o’er the land,
 The mighty angel lifts his golden wand,
 Courts the bright vision of descending power,
 Tells every gate, and measures every tower,
 And chides the tardy seals that yet detain
 Thy lion, Judah, from his destin’d reign.

Lo! cherub hands the golden courts prepare,
 Lo! thrones are set, and every saint is there;
 Earth’s utmost bounds confess their awful sway,
 The mountains worship, and the isles obey.
 Nor sun, nor moon, they need—nor day, nor night,—
 God is their temple, and the Lamb their light.
 And shall not Israel’s sons exulting come,
 Hail the glad beam, and claim their ancient home?
 On David’s throne shall David’s offspring reign,
 And the dry bones be warm with life again.
 Hark! white rob’d crowds the deep Hosannas raise,
 And the hoarse floods repeat the sound of praise;
 Ten thousand harps attune the mystic song,
 Ten thousand thousand saints the strain prolong:
 ‘Worthy the Lamb!—omnipotent to save!—
 Who died—who lives—triumphant o’er the grave!’”

“In conclusion, let me ask the Christian reader, if he owes nothing to the Jew—nothing to the expatriated, persecuted Hebrew, that should impel him to use such means in his favour, as may, by the blessing of Jehovah, lead to his conversion,

and to his restoration to the promised land? Christian, do you know anything of God? Who instructed you? Who revealed to you the six days work of Jehovah, when He created this beautiful world, and finished the earth and the heavens, and all the host of them? Was it not a Hebrew? Who told you of the sweet rest of the Sabbath? Was it not a Hebrew? Who detailed to you the history of all the loving-kindness of the Lord to His chosen people amid their oppressions in Egypt? All His wonders when He led them through the wild and trackless wilderness? Was it not a Hebrew? Who related to you the birth of Christ—His teaching and preaching—His example—His sufferings and death—His resurrection and ascension? Was it not a Jew? What knowledge have you of the true God, of the Saviour, which you have not derived from the Hebrew lawgiver, from the Jewish prophets, Jewish kings, Jewish evangelists, and Jewish apostles? Do you, then, owe nothing to the Jews in return? If pity, if gratitude, if piety, do not compel you to put forth your endeavours in their behalf, will you venture to resist the demands of justice? Be that far from you. Give them your effectual fervent prayer,—give them of your gold and silver,—give them your precious Testament, in the language of their fathers. Christian! you have much to give; and are they not poor indeed who lack your aid? And is there not a Hebrew ready to receive your bounty, and to carry up your alms even to Jerusalem? O, then, defer not the sweet work of mercy! And as you hope to see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, shew pity and kindness to their posterity on earth!"

EXERCISES.

What promises did Christ give to His disciples before He left them? Where did they assemble when they had returned to Jerusalem? What was the number of the Church at that time? What of Pentecost? What of Paul's conversion? What of his trials? Of his journeys? What of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem? What have we received from the Jews? What should we give them now in return?

APPENDIX.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF NAMES given to the SECOND PERSON of the GLORIOUS TRINITY.

ALPHA; ANOINTED.

BREAD of life; BRANCH.

CHRIST; CHIEFEST among ten thousand; COUNSELLOR; CAPTAIN
of Salvation.

DOOR—"I am the door;" DELIVERER.

EMMANUEL; EVERLASTING FATHER.

FIRST-BORN among many brethren; FAITHFUL AND TRUE; FOUNDATION—"Other foundation can no man lay," &c.

GOVERNOR; GOOD SHEPHERD.

HOLY ONE of Israel; HE that was dead; HEAD OF THE CORNER.

I—"Fear not; it is I."

JESUS—"His name shall be called Jesus."

KING of kings; KING of the Jews.

LAMB of God; LIGHT of the world; LILY of the valleys; LORD of
lords; LIFE—"I am the life."

MESSIAH; MEDIATOR; MASTER; MAN—"Behold the man."

NAZARENE.

ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD; OMEGA.

PRINCE OF PEACE; PRINCE of life; PROPHET; PRIEST.

QUICKENING SPIRIT.

REDEEMER; RULER; ROSE of Sharon.

SEED OF THE WOMAN; SAVIOUR; SON OF GOD; SON OF MAN; SON
OF DAVID; SON OF THE HIGHEST; SALVATION.

THE WAY; THE TRUTH; THE LIFE.

UNSPEAKABLE GIFT OF GOD.

VINE—"I am the true vine."

WONDERFUL—"His name shall be called Wonderful." And so it
is. "A name above every name," &c.

Note.—It will be a pleasing and profitable exercise (*not a task*) for the scholar now and again to search the Scriptures, find out the verses where these names are applied to Christ, and commit them to memory. What is stated in this Note is also applicable to the Alphabetical List of Christian Duties.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF CHRISTIAN DUTIES
recommended in Scripture for our Practical Observance.

Ask, and ye shall receive.

ABIDE in me and I in you.

ABSTAIN from all appearance of evil.

BELIEVE in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

BE NOT a hearer of the word, but a doer thereof.

BE NOT many masters.

CEASE to do evil. Cry after wisdom.

COME unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden : and I will
give you rest.

CAST thy bread upon the waters, &c.

DESPISE not prophesyings.

DESPISE not the chastening of the Lord.

DO JUSTLY, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God.

ENVY NOT the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.

ESTEEM others better than yourselves.

ENDURE hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

FLEE also youthful lusts : but follow righteousness, faith, charity,
peace, with them that call on the name of the Lord out of a
pure heart.

FIGHT the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.

GET WISDOM, get understanding.

GO TO THE ANT, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise.

GIVE HONOUR to whom honour is due.

HEAR, ye children, the instruction of a father.

HEARKEN diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and
let your soul delight itself in fatness.

IN every thing give thanks : for this is the will of God. Incline
your ear and come unto me ; hear and your soul shall live.

JUDGE not, that ye be not judged.

KEEP thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more
ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools.

LOVE THE LORD THY GOD, with all thy heart, and with all thy
soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind ; and
thy neighbour as thyself.

MY SON, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law
of thy mother.

NOW is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation ; harden not
your hearts, &c.

OWE no man any thing, but love one another.

OPPRESS not the poor because he is poor.

PREPARE to meet thy God.

PRAY without ceasing—that is, be in a praying frame of mind.

QUENCH not the Spirit.

RENDER to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.

SEEK ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near.

TRUST in the LORD at all times; ye people pour out your hearts before Him, God is a refuge for us.

WATCH and pray, that ye enter **not** into temptation.

WATCH, for ye know not what ~~hour~~ your LORD doth come.

WHAT I say unto one, I say unto all, Watch, &c.

LIST OF EXTRAORDINARY MEN recorded in Scripture.

Adam; Cain; Abel; Enoch; Methuselah; Lamech; Noah; Shem; Ham; Japheth; Terah; Abraham; Lot; Eleazar; Isaac; Jacob; Reuben; Simeon; Levi; Judah; Zebulon; Issachar; Dan; Gad; Asher; Naphtali; Joseph, and Benjamin (see their character, Gen. xlix.); Pharaoh; Moses; Aaron; Jethro; Caleb; Joshua; Korah; Dathan; Abiram; Barak; Sisera. (The Judges).—Othniel; Ehud; Barak; Gideon; Abimelech; Tola; Jair; Jephthah; Ibzan; Elon; Abdon; Samson, and Samuel. For a list of the Kings of Israel and Judah, and the Prophets, see the Chronological Table. Job; Jonah; Mordecai; Haman; Ahasuerus; Artaxerxes; Cyrus; Nebuchadnezzar; Belshazzar; Shadrach; Meshech; Abednego; Darius; Zerubbabel; Jeshua; Ezra, and Nehemiah, &c., &c.

Matthew; Mark; Luke; John; Peter; Judas; Paul; Pilate; Felix; Festus, &c.

LIST OF EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN recorded in Scripture.

Eve; Sarah; Rebekah; Deborah, her nurse; Leah; Rachel; Ziporah; Miriam; Rahab; Deborah, the Prophetess; Jael; Delilah; Naomi; Ruth; Hannah; Michael; Abigail, and Bathsheba, wives of David; Queen Athaliah; Jezebel; The Widow-woman of Zarephath; The Shunammite; Vashti, and Esther; The three Women who stood by the Cross of Christ, &c.

LIST OF EXTRAORDINARY EVENTS recorded in Scripture.

The Creation of the World; the Fall of our First Parents; the Murder of Abel; the Tower of Babel; the Confounding of Language; the Flood; the Call of Abraham; the Offering of his Son Isaac; the Preservation of Moses when born; the Burning Bush; the Ten Plagues of Egypt; Israel leaving Egypt in one Night; their Marching through the Red Sea; their Food and Drink in the Wilderness; the Giving of the Law at Sinai; their Making and Worshipping the Golden Calf; the Deaths of Aaron and Moses; Israel Passing through Jordan; Taking of Jericho and Ai; the Sun and Moon standing still; the mighty deeds of Samson, &c.

Following these remarkable events, the scholar may be examined on the "Chronological Table of the Kings and Prophets of Judah and Israel," by asking their character, or what was remarkable in the reign of each of them—Job's Adversity and Prosperity; Jonah cast into the Sea, and preserved; THE CAPTIVITY; Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel's Dreams; the Three Children cast into the Burning Furnace; Daniel cast into the Den of Lions.

THE RESTORATION.—Building the Second Temple.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST.—His Flight into Egypt; His first appearance in the Temple; His Baptism; His Transfiguration; His mode of Teaching; His Miracles; His Sufferings and Death; His glorious Resurrection and Ascension.

EXERCISES.

The Exercises on the Appendix may be conducted something after this manner:—

Give the names applied to Christ which begin with the first three letters of the Alphabet. Mention three Christian duties, beginning with the letter B, &c. Who was Adam? For what was he remarkable? &c., &c.

SACRED RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS.

RIVERS.—Pison—Gihon—Hiddekel—Euphrates—Abana and Parpar—Jordan, and the Nile, Kishon, &c.

MOUNTAINS.—Ararat—Moriah—Sinai—Hor—Pisgah—Horeb—Carmel—Lebanon—Zion—Tabor—Olivet—Calvary.

EXERCISES.

For what was each and all of these rivers and mountains remarkable? Where are they situated?

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